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CHRISTIANITY AND SIN

BY

ROBERT MACKINTOSH, D.D.

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PREFACE

THE reader will observe that Chapters I-IV deal with the Old Testament and its period, V-VIII with the New Testament, and IX-XII with post-biblical history. It would also be possible to draw a dividing line after Chapter IX. Up to that point everything studied, even the most sacred and most authoritative, belongs to the world of ancient thought. From Chapter X onwards, the atmosphere is or ought to be modern.

Some points for which space was lacking in Chapter VII of this book are more fully treated in an article in the *Expositor* for May 1913 upon 'The Roots of St. Paul's Doctrine of Sin.' Similarly, in connection with Chapter VI, I might name three articles contributed to the *Expository Times* for 1905 on 'The Dawn of the Messianic Consciousness.'

In terminating a task of three years, I pray God that, in spite of all deficiencies, this little book may make some contribution to the study of a topic which, however difficult and painful, is inseparably connected with faith in Christ.

R. M.

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CHRISTIANITY AND SIN

CHAPTER I

PRE-PROPHETIC IDEAS OF SIN IN ISRAEL

When Julius Müller wrote his classical monograph upon the doctrine of sin, he elected without hesitation to follow what he called a speculative method. His choice was natural, for he wrote under the influence of the great idealist systems of German philosophy. At the present day a different choice is no less plainly incumbent upon us. We live in an age of research. Philosophy is weaker than of old, but the science of history grows stronger and stronger. Even so great a theologian as Albrecht Ritschl failed to adjust himself adequately to the new historical reading of the religion of Israel. Or rather perhaps, when Ritschl wrote, results were not so clearly defined as they now are. If a Christian theologian of to-day is to keep in touch with all the Biblical material regarding sin, he must make it plain to himself and to his readers that we start comparatively low down. The conceptions of sin which the earlier portions of the Old Testament literature reveal might very nearly be called pre-ethical. Not until the great prophets of the Old Testament do ethical standards predominate. Not until we study the teaching of Christ and of the New Testament do we find such standards supreme.

We may begin our work with a provisional definition. In terms of the old logic, one might say that the essence or

formal cause of sin is twofold. Sin is guilt, and sin is guilt as against God. In non-biblical religions we might frequently be able to contrast sins as such—wrongs committed directly against God or the gods—with crimes as such, *i.e.* with wrongs inflicted upon man or the community (tribe, city, state). In the Old Testament we shall find very little of this external contrast. If Robertson Smith is right in his view of primitive Semitic religion, which of course was the earthly starting-point of the religion of Israel, all sins of which cognisance was taken were at the first mortal offences, committed equally against God and against the clan. For they were wrongs done to that sacred blood which was common to the deity, to the community of worshippers, to the wrong-doer himself, and to the sacred animals. Other wrongs, such as did not amount to mortal sins, hardly came into the reckoning at all. If this conjectural restoration of the earliest Semitic religion wins general acceptance, it will cease to be a remarkable thing that the Old Testament should exhibit few traces of a distinction between sins and crimes. Still, the admission would have to be made that, even in early portions of the Old Testament, the supposed primitive religious ideas show signs of disintegrating. There is always a certain contrast between sins committed against men and sins against God. In 1 Samuel ii the sin of Eli's sons is *first* injustice to the people, and such injustice as makes religious duty unpalatable; *secondly*, a more directly sacrilegious interference with the customary law of the sanctuary at Shiloh. The latter offence might seem to be more distinctively sinful, because committed more directly against God. Yet we may hold it characteristic of the Old Testament that, in Eli's too feeble rebuke of his sons, emphasis is laid upon the other fault—upon the heinousness of wronging and misleading the people. The primitive basis of Semitic religion may have done something to produce this characteristic temper; the

ethical spirit of Old Testament revelation has done more. Throughout its whole career the Bible closely connects duty to God with duty to Israel or (in later stages of revelation) to man. So also sin against man ranks almost from the first as sin also against God.

A graver question might arise. Do the earliest phases of thought in Israel regarding conduct that is condemned deserve to be called doctrines of sin at all? Do they recognise guilt in any true sense? Or do they yield a *quasi* hamartiology rather than a hamartiology strictly so-called? Perhaps this question is verbal. It may be a question regarding the proper use of language rather than a serious doubt regarding the facts of Israelite belief. Still in any case it is well to repeat the warning that we begin our study with opinions which are by no means purely ethical.

In the Old Testament the earliest doctrine of sin—whether properly or only metaphorically so-called—is associated with certain physical conceptions of divine 'holiness.' That is an important related conception, which passes through a parallel series of transformations. At its starting-point it stands definitely below ethical levels, and it drags down with it to the same inferior levels the doctrine about conduct such as incurs hostile relations with God—doctrine which when ethically reinterpreted we shall unhesitatingly call a doctrine of sin. God's holiness is conceived first of all as a sort of physical infection. It is found in holy things, persons, and usages, and avenges itself automatically upon the rash intruder. The classical examples of this belief are found in the stories recorded about the ark after its capture by the Philistines. The ark carries disaster with it from city to city of the enemy. More than that: when returned to Israel it brings pestilence to the men of Beth-shemesh, who rashly look inside it. So far, there is a tempting rationalistic

interpretation; viz., that the ark actually carried (perhaps from the first visited Philistine city, Ashdod) the infection of bubonic plague. To that disease the word 'swellings' or 'tumours,' wrongly translated in A.V. 'emerods,' *i.e.* 'hæmorrhoids,' seems to point. This explanation fails us, however, when we pass to the story of Uzzah, who, for touching the sacred chest with an innocent and even laudable motive, is struck dead. We can hardly be expected to receive that narrative as historical. If conservative Bible readers are aggrieved at such a suggestion, they may be asked whether they really suppose that the God of righteousness acted according to the half-superstitious ideas of His early worshippers? Is it not easier to hold that some of the stories record for us the beliefs of Israel rather than the actual policy and behaviour of Israel's God?

Be all that as it may, we have one plain fact to recognise. Israel believed in a material contagion of holiness, passing from what was divine property and 'tabooing' other things that came in contact with the divine. And Israel believed that God's holiness was apt to recoil like an electric discharge upon any one who unwarrantably approached it. 'This holy God' in the early days of Israel's religion meant hardly more than 'this formidable God.'

It may not be possible to draw a clear line of separation between this first stage and a second. Yet there is surely a difference when we are told that God, a personal God, was angry, and wreaked His angry passion upon men. The reaction as now conceived is no longer purely physical. It is psychical; though truly it is hardly yet moral, for the divine anger need not in the earlier narratives be called forth by true guilt. A striking example of such narratives is found in the story of King David's census (2 Sam. xxiv.), leading up to the sanctity of the altar at Jerusalem, where the plague incurred by the census was stayed.

The significant point for our present purpose is not the problem why a census was deemed sinful. That also, no doubt, is antique belief, and almost, if not quite, pre-ethical. But, accepting the assumption that a census is to rank as sinful, we are interested in a point lying further back along the strange sequence of supposed causes. First of all, God is angry with Israel. No reason is given for this. None is needed. For the theology of early Israel, as for Hyper-Calvinism and probably for many of the Moslem schools, God would cease to be divine if He might not indulge in the fullest caprice. Secondly, God (1 Chron., preserving the story because of its connection with the temple, decorously writes 'Satan') provokes David to take the census of Israel. Thirdly, the punishment of this sin—or the expression of the wrath it inevitably calls forth—takes the form of a pestilence. Fourthly, when the divine compassion awakes, God accepts a sacrifice at a new site—a site henceforth to be ever memorable.

Much if not everything in this circle of ideas is essentially pagan. Accordingly, it was capable of being transferred to other gods besides the God of Israel. When Israel and allied kings were baffled before the capital of Moab, after the besieged king had offered his heir-apparent in sacrifice, there was 'great wrath against Israel' (2 Kings iii. 27). Perhaps this means pestilence. Possibly it rather implies a military disaster. On either view it is more than likely that the wrath of Chemosh, not of Jahveh, was supposed to work the mischief. The invaders were on the soil of Chemosh,[1] and Chemosh had just been terribly invoked.

It has been said above that one hesitates to affirm a definite superiority of this stage in belief over the primi-

[1] Cf. Judges xi. 24. The difficulty why Chemosh should be the god of Ammonites does not concern us here. But we must note the full significance of such a passage. It is little, perhaps, that crude religious ideas should be attributed to Jephthah the Gileadite. It is not so little a matter that the historian should record these ideas, and editors leave them unexpunged.

tive *quasi* physical view of holiness, or of the 'sin' which outraged holiness so promptly avenges. There are passages where 'wrath' too seems to be the name of a physical infection, capable of being remedied in its turn by ritual or physical checks (cf. further, Num. xvi. 46). And yet there is at least the promise or potency of higher advance when the anger of a divine person is recognised as formidable rather than a perilous quality attaching to holy things.

At this same stage we encounter the primitive Israelite view of sacrifice. However we theorise that rite, it must be understood as at least including within it appropriate remedies for maladjustment of relations with God. The most notable embodiment of the primitive view occurs in the more antique and more dignified of the two narratives, which tell us how David had Saul at his mercy, and spared him. 'If Jahveh have stirred thee up against me,' says David to the king, 'let him smell an offering' (1 Sam. xxvi. 19). A modern mind hardly follows this logic. If sacrifice was to put things right, we might have supposed that it would fall to David to make the approaches to heaven. But no: the matter is treated as one concerning King Saul. If the divine will or whim has stung him with the gadfly of madness, he would willingly be free from it. And, upon the hypothesis in question, the remedy is plain. If it is God who is the originator of the trouble, a sacrifice will put everything right. Here again the closing part of David's speech attracts almost greater attention than the words bearing upon sin or upon sacrifice. 'If it be the children of men [that have stirred thee up against me] cursed be they before Jahveh: for they have driven me out this day that I should not cleave unto the inheritance of Jahveh, saying, Go, serve other gods.' Yet we need not pause to expound these words. They contribute nothing to a doctrine of sin. We take sufficient account of them if we recognise in them once more the pre-ethical stratum in the religion of Israel. They would

localise Jehovah within the border of Israel as Chemosh is localised in Moab.

Another stage in advance towards a true and worthy doctrine of sin (though perhaps not a very great advance) is signalised by the recognition of human acts as calling forth divine wrath. We do not say as yet, calling it forth justly. That is a further and distinctive advance, one that is nothing short of revolution. But when divine anger ceases to be conceived as sovereign and incalculable; when the worshipper may assure himself that certain forms of conduct are unconditionally fatal and others ascertainably safe—he is so far in a happier position. In this connection we have to take note of another of the curious ideas embedded in the primitive Israelite religion. We have spoken above of physical ideas of holiness corresponding to physical ideas of sin. We have spoken of sacrifice as—among its other properties—a remedy for causeless or utterly mysterious divine wrath. Now, in dealing with the subject of calculable (not necessarily just or moral) divine anger, we come upon the idea of the *curse*.

The only curse we have to take cognisance of is one in the name of Jahveh. Foreigners may curse in the name of their gods, and men of worthless anti-social disposition may work the black magic of witchcraft by entering into alliance with some of the fringe of spirits who offer their evil services to human clients. But the true and loyal Israelite, as he swears only by Jahveh (and keeps his vow), so when he curses will curse by Jahveh's name; and in cursing as well as in blessing or in vowing he will mean what he says. It may seem to us that a perfectly efficient celestial executive ought not to need a curse to set its activities in motion. A God of justice will right the cause of His servants, perhaps soon, perhaps late, but in any case surely. Precisely! a God of justice will do that. But hitherto the Israelite mind has not completely convinced

itself that God is just. And more than this may be said on behalf of Israel. We ourselves believe in God's good-will. Yet we think it our duty no less than our privilege to appeal to that good-will in prayer. The ruder Israelite, half convinced of God's justice, thought he might lead to its fuller or speedier execution by uttering curses. Also he could in this way give grateful utterance to the furious anger which surged up in his breast. Truly, a dangerous privilege; yet one that was dearly prized and long acted upon.

But this secondary motive must not blind us to the leading one. Curses for the antique world were decidedly something more than angry ebullitions. They might not be infallible in their working, but they were menacing and risky things. When the mother of 'Micah the priest-maker' met his confession of theft with the words, 'Blessed be thou of Jahveh' (Judges xvii. 2), she was setting a subsequent formula of benediction to counterwork a previous formula of commination pronounced upon an unknown wrongdoer, now tragically discovered in her own son.[1] When King David after abdication warns[2] his successor against such bad characters as Shimei and Joab, we may think the dying man's admonitions unpleasant, ignoble, perhaps even treacherous; but we must recognise that the curses spoken by Shimei were dangerous things to have lying about, and that a dishonoured death would thrust them down the original speaker's throat. So, too, the crimes of Joab might involve bad luck for the nation and the monarchy; they might, as it were, operate like an unspoken but acted curse—unless neutralised by appropriate slaughter.[3]

[1] Her 'vow' is possibly an additional precaution against bad effects from the curse. Others think the money was already 'vowed' to a sacred use.

[2] 1 Kings ii. The passage is probably historical; in any case it is significant as to the beliefs of ancient Israel.

[3] When Proverbs xxvi. 2 teaches that 'the causeless curse lighteth not,' this may be a moral protest; there can be no purely magical effect of spells when no evil is deserved! The next stage is to abolish spells altogether.

A very curious and significant passage, illustrating not the curse formula but the curse doom, occurs in the appendix to Samuel (2 Sam. xxi. 1-14). Famine has come upon the land. An oracle interprets it as due to a crime committed by Saul against the Gibeonites. Israel had entered into solemn alliance with these aborigines, but 'Saul sought to slay them in his zeal for the children of Israel and Judah.' Those who take a malignant view of King David's character suppose that he had secured this decision from the oracle in order to sweep away almost all the survivors of the older dynasty. More probably, if there was any private malice at work, it was that of Abiathar,[1] a priest and keeper of an oracle, with his own bitter reasons for hating the house of Saul. Whatever its inner history may have been, the oracle is accepted as authoritative, and the Gibeonites are asked to name a penalty. First, they reply with polite deprecation or with an oblique hint. Being further encouraged, they then formally demand the life of seven of Saul's representatives. These are duly hanged, and their remains gibbeted under conditions of peculiar pathos; and, the Gibeonites being appeased, 'God is entreated for the land.' Neither the satisfaction of divine justice alone, nor yet the satisfaction of Gibeonite hatred alone, will deliver the land. Both must be adequately secured.

On the other side it is fair to point out that at times formulæ of cursing must have been used without any serious meaning at all, *e.g.*, 1 Samuel xxv. 22, 'God do so to David.'[2] In truth, the habit of cursing must have been as bad for reverence as it was for self-control.

A very serious example of the curse occurs in the history of Jonathan, 1 Samuel xiv. In this case the curse is conditional. Saul imprecates the death penalty upon any

[1] Budde suggests this possibility.

[2] Following LXX and R.V. margin. The Massoretic reading (A.V. and R.V. text) deliberately avoids so shocking a phrase, but makes no sense.

one tasting food before victory in the day's battle is fully secured, and Jonathan in ignorance of the curse takes some wild honey. Here, again—as in innumerable parallels from the ancient world, *e.g.* the story of Œdipus—we must judge that ethical conditions are not satisfied. It is still the thing done, not the thing deliberately and wrongly done, that incurs penalty; though once more Hebrew tradition assures us that the oracle of God was on the side of the imperfect justice of Saul's administration. In the end Jonathan is rescued by the people, but, according to one commentator,[1] only through supplying a substitute to endure the death penalty. This view, if adopted, is almost painfully suggestive.

In the last and highest stage we meet with a truly ethical doctrine of sin, and a truly if not absolutely ethical standard. Calamity, 'as usual in the ancient world,' implies or proves previous transgression. According to Duhm's depreciatory view of the penitential psalms, these are all written in sickness, because sickness is held to attest moral guilt. Another and a surer example of an ethicised yet incompletely ethicised view of sin is found in the existing form of the second commandment, which tells us that God 'visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generations' (Ex. xx. 5). Even in Deuteronomy, where the human administration of capital punishment is hedged in by a law of stricter justice,[2] the old view of God's sweeping retributions holds its ground. There is vengeance for the third and fourth generation of God's enemies, if there is mercy for thousands of generations to His friends.

Up to the point we reach in this chapter, the doctrine of sin, so far as such a doctrine exists in early Israel, contemplates isolated failures on the part of a few souls here

[1] Budde; his suggestion does not seem to be adopted by other authorities.
[2] xxiv. 16. But on this see further below, p. 15.

and there. Individual offence may be visited with fatal penalties, perhaps involving others along with the wrong-doer. But the friendship between God and His people is taken for granted. It exists by nature. Nothing can shake it. Whatever happens to individuals, the fellowship between God and the nation abides as long as either endures. If one perishes both must disappear. It will be part of the work of the prophets to pulverise this belief.

As a contributory current of ethical ideas regarding sin, it may be well to notice other passages—passages where wrong is rebuked as a fault between man and man. We have no clear evidence that early Israel penalised vice as sacrilegious. Custom rather than law was then in force, and custom could hardly secure that every one who shocked the conscience of his neighbours should be called to legal account. Perhaps this made for ethical advance. Philosophers have often told us that, if the penalties of sin were too striking and too instantaneous, well-doing might become automatic and cease to be moral. It may have been a good thing that early Israel knew of other bad and shameful actions—deeds of 'folly'—besides those which were authoritatively taboo in the name of religion.

Only in rare cases like the horror at Gibeah [1] did general indignation at extreme vice express itself in concerted punishment. And even then punishment might take the form of war. It was still possible for the locality, with a mistaken tribal patriotism, to shield the offender. Had such shameful acts been recognised in the theology of the age as mortal sin, we may be sure this could not have happened.

[1] If, as recent criticism holds, much of Judges xix. (at any rate) is to be regarded as historical.

CHAPTER II

HAMARTIOLOGY IN THE GREAT PROPHETS AND UNDER THEIR INFLUENCE

IT is time to turn our attention towards those higher qualities in the religion of Israel, which ultimately made it supreme among God's interpreters. At the beginning of the nation's development stands the vaguely majestic figure of Moses. We cannot doubt that he impressed on the religion of his people the stamp which abode with it to the end. Yet we must recognise that we have little certain information regarding his doctrines, and that he could only implant germinal truths, whose fuller development was a task for later ages. The next great name in religious history, Samuel's, is scarcely less nebulous. When we reach Elijah we have firmer ground beneath our feet. Yet our main reliance must be upon books left us by the great writing prophets, or upon elements in the law (including Deuteronomy) which show clear traces of the prophetic spirit.

It would be possible to treat Moses differently if one could accept the view that at least the Decalogue, or at the very least its kernel, was primitive and genuine. But a little study of the evidence forbids such a conclusion, if only because of the fact which the acute mind of the poet Goethe first made prominent, that we have two Decalogues in Exodus, one in chapter xx and one in chapter xxxiv. Had the high ethical generalisations

of Exodus xx been given through Moses, it is unthinkable that the much less advanced Decalogue of Exodus xxxiv could ever have come into existence. As a tentative approach towards better things, the generalisations of Exodus xxxiv are in their right place. Some indeed may find it strange that the unknown prophetic pamphleteer, to whom under God we owe Exodus xx, should have had his work accepted through long ages as the very words of the King of heaven. But the use of such terms is unfair. The unknown human author was not composing freely. He was endeavouring to state, as clearly as might be, the principles of Israel's religion and revelation; and God granted His servant success. The soul of Moses spoke to the world through this unknown man.

The Decalogue of Exodus xxxiv[1] is assigned to what is by most critics, no doubt rightly, considered the oldest of the great documents[2] underlying the Hexateuch—J; a document belonging to the southern kingdom of Judah.[3] The chapter stands in our texts in close connection with chapter xxxii, the story of the Golden Calf at Sinai. If that connection could be regarded as original, this chapter would be marked as a manifesto of the piety of Judah, protesting against 'molten gods' (xxxii. 4, xxxiv. 17), such as were honoured at [Dan?[4] and] Bethel. The popular piety of north Israel may have claimed that such worship was primeval, and possibly that it had the sanction, in Aaron, of the earliest great priest. J would rejoin then—yes, indeed; such worship was a primeval sin, and it received the bitterest condemnation from God's true prophet Moses. Thus the keynote is already

[1] Cf. ver. 27. No doubt the passage has been much worked over by editors. It is not easy to restore the original in detail.

[2] Or collections of documents.

[3] Also it uses for God the name Jahveh or Jehovah from an extremely early time (Gen. iv. 26).

[4] There are critical grounds for doubting whether the original image at Dan (Judges xvii and xviii) was more than the simpler 'graven image.'

struck for one of two rival ways of contemplating the Mosaic period. Elsewhere, great prophets look back wistfully to a better past (Isa. i. 26, Jer. ii. 2). But Exodus xxxii anticipates the gloomier view which rules the later literature—the view that the people were wicked from their earliest days.

Several other points may be rapidly mentioned in regard to this Decalogue. It addresses the nation as a unit; 'Thou shalt not,' 'thy males.' Further, it excludes the worship of foreign gods with all possible definiteness. Historically this is the demand formulated by Elijah, a northern prophet. Behind it may lie monolatry rather than monotheism. There could hardly be such tense hostility to the worship of foreign deities if they were considered non-existent beings. So long as they are considered at least half alive, the God of holiness must needs regard them with jealousy. After a period of contempt for 'non-gods,' later ages revive the primitive attitude by defining strange gods as devils. Finally, we note that the duties required and sins excluded in detail have to do with religious ritual.

Far more significance belongs to the Decalogue of Exodus xx. This may with tolerable certainty be referred to the companion document or group of documents, E—which had its origin in Ephraim.[1] But we have the Decalogue of this document in two independent versions —not only at Exodus xx but at Deuteronomy v. Still further we can claim—perhaps more confidently[2] than in regard to the Decalogue of Exodus xxxiv—that an older original form lies behind our present text. As between the versions of Exodus and Deuteronomy, we

[1] And which—like the priestly document P—used only Elohim for the name of God in the ages before the revelation at Sinai.

[2] Though we are not free from difficulties. When we ask how the Ten Words are to be numbered and arranged, we find not only scholar opposed to scholar but Church to Church.

cannot doubt that the text of Deuteronomy v is the later, because[1] Deuteronomy misunderstands the archaism of 'house' for household, and so places the 'wife' before the house in our tenth commandment. As a final argument we might add that the Sh^{e}ma of Deuteronomy vi (4, 5) is even nobler than the Decalogue of Exodus xx (or of Deut. v), inasmuch as it urges not mere moral negations but the positive duty of love to God. That was the distinctive message of Deuteronomic piety.

The pattern for each of the original Ten Words is furnished by short commandments like our sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth, or like some of the verses in Exodus xxxiv. Yet perhaps there was no great interval in time between the codification of the Decalogue of Exodus xx and its expansion by means of homiletical insertions. There is reason to infer that most of these additions were earlier than Deuteronomy, and too well accredited for the Deuteronomist to challenge them. This may explain his agreement both with Exodus xx and Exodus xxxiv (ver. 9) as to the inheritance of punishment by three and even four generations. Early piety must have regarded such cruel severity as necessary to God's majesty. Even if we should cut out the higher teaching of Deuteronomy xxiv. 16, as suspiciously resembling Jeremiah xxxi. 30 and not perhaps completely at home in its context, still we must grant that Deuteronomy breathes the same advancing moral spirit which was to find that precise expression[2] very slightly later. In contrast with this, the expanded second commandment breathes the spirit of a ruder age.

The loftier Decalogue of Exodus xx continues to exhibit many resemblances to the less advanced summary of Exodus xxxiv. It addresses the nation; although the commandments of the Second Table must be held to contemplate individuals. It is mainly negative, re-

[1] Apart from considerations of less importance.
[2] Cf. not only Jer. xxxi but Ezek. xviii.

quiring virtues by prohibiting sins. Indeed, it is more negative than its predecessor. It begins with the exclusion of foreign gods. But[1] it excludes in the second commandment not merely the new-fangled idolatry that made use of molten images, but all images for religious worship of whatever kind. And here we find one further proof that the Decalogue belongs to a somewhat late stage in Israel's history. Gideon's ephod (perhaps the ephod generally of early times) was almost undoubtedly an image; and we may be sure that for Gideon's age its use was no 'whorish' abuse, but simply a refined elegance, and a tribute to the nation's God. But things have changed by the time Exodus xx is formulated. Things have gone beyond the standpoint even of J. The moral protest of the south seems to echo back from the north in widened and strengthened form. And the banning of all kinds of images without exception has more of definite moral principle in it than a conservatism which dislikes the molten image as an innovation while finding the familiar graven image inoffensive.

The Sabbath stands in both Decalogues; circumcision does not appear in either. Later, when exile made it impossible to carry out fully the requirements of a ritual law, these two institutions gained importance as distinctive Jewish badges. May one conjecture that the Sabbath had a value for the prophets,[2] which led to its retaining its place in Exodus xx? It is the one piece of external religion in that Decalogue, as contrasted with a long list of ritual requirements and prohibitions at Exodus xxxiv. The oath or the vow—to be faithfully performed to Jehovah's name—and the command to honour parents, are new in Exodus xx.

But the chief glory of the Decalogue is its second half. In contrast with Exodus xxxiv Exodus xx includes duty to man (primarily, to the fellow Israelite) as part of God's

[1] At least in the form in which we have it. [2] See 2 Kings iv. 23.

supreme law, and so virtually as part of duty to God. It has been remarked that the order of the commandments six to ten is ruled by a plain principle. They forbid, not indeed greater and then steadily lesser sins—that would involve a very perilous casuistry—but greater and then steadily lessening injuries to one's neighbour. One interesting result of this analysis is to vindicate the spiritual sense of the tenth commandment. Such teaching is surprising enough, in a document still comparatively early. But what else can the meaning be? Three injuries in act have been forbidden, and one in word; all that can be added further is prohibition of the injurious thought.[1]

In the combination of the two sets of duties, the Decalogue —the greater Decalogue—manifests those qualities which gave historic greatness to the prophets' teaching. It speaks for *ethical monotheism*. Even if the language is that of monolatry, the meaning goes deeper. There is a great deal still to be learned before moral requirement is revealed in its full loftiness. Yet a beginning has been made. Formally, it may be correct to say that five commandments rule out sins, against God or against parents, while five others rule out wrongs against one's fellows. But, in the very act of making this distinction, the Decalogue cancels it. Both tables come from God. Wrong itself is sinful.

Superior to the brief code of prophetic ideals contained in Exodus xx—superior even to the Sh^{e}ma—is the deeply earnest moral teaching given by those great prophets whose books have come to us down the stream of time. These books exhibit personal religion as an essential part of the prophet's vocation. (1) The prophet was God's intimate friend. Knowledge of God's purpose for the nation

[1] The third and ninth commandments do not really overlap. Among the Hebrews an accused or suspected person might be put upon oath, to purge or to incriminate himself. But a third person offering testimony does not seem to have been bound by oaths.

came to him perhaps in a vision, certainly as an intuitive subconscious assurance; not reasoned out but irresistibly borne in upon his mind. (2) The prophet teaches ethical monotheism, and he reads the ethical values negatively as well as positively. He has a voice of thunder in which to denounce the evil of sin; this element in his outfit is forgotten by many modernists, who compliment and patronise long dead prophets of God, but regard the doctrine of sin with contempt. The tone of moral indignation in Amos or Micah is unmistakable; we shall meet this mark of the prophetic spirit again far from ancient Israel, in Bishop Butler. (3) The sin rebuked, the duty mainly insisted on, is the nation's. That singular composite moral personality is everything, or all but everything, to these great moralists. Very slowly and with difficulty does it disintegrate. (4) The sin of the nation is sharply bitten into the prophetic conscience by the approach of the Assyrian power. A highly antique though truly not primitive way of thinking, according to which calamity proves moral guilt, is among the implied subconscious axioms of prophetic teaching. In another way the whole moral world was simplified or unified by the cruel Assyrian supremacy. This helped towards conscious monotheism. One great and terrible danger called for faith in one still greater and more terrible power—in one God. (5) The prophets charge the nation with having incurred deliberate guilt. The people are not merely weaklings; they are rebels (Isa. i. 2). The tendency of recent criticism is to find hardly anything else in the prophets besides this heavy charge. Such 'vigour and rigour' always mean exaggeration. If the prophets had possessed no messages of hope, they could not have been the interpreters of God or the forerunners of Christ. Still there is much truth entangled among the exaggerations of recent criticism. The prophetic hamartiology, like many a later version of the doctrine, finds those whom

it addresses hopelessly ruined—tried already, and condemned, and in expectation of capital punishment. Being a nation, Israel has to die out from the list of nations in exile. That is her capital punishment. (6) This more distinctively theological judgment, based on the political facts of the age, is corroborated by more definitely moral judgments, such as the prophets furnish in great detail. Notably the sin of the godless rich against the poor is emphasised, hardly less by a great gentleman like Isaiah of Jerusalem than by peasant prophets such as Amos and Micah. Amos, the very first representative of written prophecy, brands with similar condemnation other sins against humanity. As the nation is the subject of guilt, so in at least one passage [1] the nation appears as the victim of wicked Israelite oppressors. Nor are sins of drunkenness and of sexual vice ever long out of sight.

Amos opens his prophecies with a survey of some seven nations,[2] including and culminating in Israel. A Judean by race, he was called by his inspiration to work in the larger kingdom of the north. The sins he here denounces may be summed up as (1) sins of inhumanity committed by non-Israelite nations against Israel; (2) similar sins committed by non-Israelites against non-Israelites; (3) sins of inhumanity committed *by Israel*. This sequence and climax justify Amos's grim interpretation of Israel's special prerogatives: 'You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities' (iii. 2). It is a superficial judgment surely to call the attitude of such a prophet 'narrow particularism.' In the eyes of this prophet, God's care watches over every race (ix. 7). Through the dialect of particularism we can catch the thoughts of universalism. If Amos is a particularist, God send us others like him!

[1] 'What mean ye that ye *crush my people*, and grind the faces of the poor?' (Isa. iii. 15).

[2] Critical doubts regarding some details do not affect us.

And yet again, we dare not deny the peculiarity of the relation between God and Israel. All that is most sacred in Christianity rests upon the acknowledgment that God worked for all mankind first through the special agency of Israel then through the sole mediation of Christ.

One thing more must be noted in regard to Amos. The denunciation of sacrificial worship[1] seems more unmistakable and more absolute than that of later prophets. He insists that sacrificial worship of Jahveh formed no part of the piety of Israel in the wilderness. Laxities in sacrificing are not to rank as sins, nor sacrificial punctilios as virtues. Such a theory addresses an almost impossible demand to an ancient people. It asks for a religion which consists in dutiful conduct towards the national God—in that and nothing else. May one say that such a religion is not really fitted to cope with the problem of sin? Striking as his denunciations are, it is doubtful whether Amos has measured sin to its depths.

Hosea leads the way towards describing a prophet's initial vision, such as consecrates the whole life of Isaiah Jeremiah or Ezekiel, and according to tradition of Moses. But the experience which Hosea puts on record is strangely different. There can be little doubt that his opening chapters are history used as parable, the tragic unfaithfulness of his wife becoming to him a parable of Israel's disloyalty to the covenant God. But more than that; his own love becomes to Hosea a parable of God's love. Those sex relationships which had played so gross a part in paganism are now reclaimed and carried up, under the teaching of cruel grief, into the loftiest regions. Hosea is the first great preacher to announce that God is love.[2] The counterpart of this truth, *Thou shalt love Jahveh thy God*, is perhaps less verbally manifest in

[1] Though the text is difficult and corrupt.

[2] Deuteronomy, according to the critical dating, learns this from Hosea.

Hosea's book. But the thought is there, and even the word [1] has been employed by Principal G. A. Smith in rendering Hosea's *hesedh*. That term, usually rendered 'mercy,' is one more symptom of the deep inwardness of Hosea's piety.

Not less inward is Hosea's view of sin. It would not be correct to say that he shares the moral indignation of robust spirits like Amos and Micah. What he reveals is absolute horror at the vision of evil. He sees it as perpetrated not merely in defiance of a righteous will but in contempt of love. And yet because it is love that suffers, love cannot accept defeat. Perhaps radical criticism is right when it tells us that Amos has no message of mercy. In his book, possibly, the passages of comfort are indeed later glosses. But such a conclusion is unthinkable in regard to Hosea. His most characteristic expression is *How can I give thee up?* (xi. 8). Precisely when the horror of sin is seen, pardon and rescue become inevitable, and gospel tidings of grace begin to be heard.[2]

There is full and striking teaching on the subject of sin in the record of Isaiah's [3] call (chap. vi), the most eloquent and not the least profound of all such passages. In a vision Isaiah sees the temple occupied at one end by a lofty throne upon which God Himself sits, with mysterious beings called Seraphim singing His praise, and is smitten with terror and shame. He is undone, for he has seen God; and, in contrast to the holy ministers of God's sanctuary, he is of unclean lips like all his guilty nation. But a seraph glides from his place, and with the sacred tongs lifts a red-hot coal from the altar-hearth. This touches the prophet's lips. With the inconsequence of a dream, nothing is intimated in regard to pain from

[1] 'Leal love.'

[2] Criticism holds that Hosea's attack on the 'calf' images, as he contemptuously terms them, is an innovation of great historical importance.

[3] Micah is omitted from lack of space.

such an experience. But it is accompanied by the assurance of forgiveness, and Isaiah is now pure enough to offer himself as God's servant and spokesman.[1]

Very remarkable here is the immediate sense of sin in the Divine presence, an experience which recurs at Job xlii, and again at Luke v. One is further struck by the sense of kinship between the guilty prophet and the guilty people. It is true we are not told that Isaiah is in solidarity with them, but only that the background of their impure speech aggravates the impurity of which he becomes conscious in himself. We must wait perhaps for the life of Jesus before we have any repetition of this experience.[2] In the later Old Testament the righteous few isolate themselves emphatically from the guilty many. When in Christ we find perfect sinlessness, we also find perfect fellowship with the lost. Again, the emphasis on pollution and on purification is remarkable; but more must be said of this when we speak of the Law.

If we judged Isaiah purely by his initial vision, we should rank him among the prophets of unrelieved despair. Fortunately there remains one piece of contrary evidence which no ingenuity can abolish, the name of Isaiah's son Shear-Jashub, *Remnant-shall-return*. The visible beginnings of a gospel in Hosea are not trampled out by his great successor, but kindle into clearer flame. And we are incidentally warned not to assume that one vision or one oracle imposes limits on a prophet, beyond which he cannot stray. There seems no reason to doubt that this same Isaiah became the prophet of the inviolability of Zion, and of the great coming king, known to later days[3] as 'the' Messiah. We must not infer that the southern kingdom earned a more lenient sentence than the northern, but rather that Isaiah was led to give clearer utterance

[1] It appears probable that the message of hope, half hinted at the close of this chapter, is a later intrusion.

[2] Unless Isa. liii reflects an earlier experience in the same kind.

[3] Adopting or adapting the language of Ps. ii. 2.

than any prophet before him to the hope that is implied in the very name of God.

The king of Judah during Isaiah's best days was Hezekiah. It is reasonable to suppose that the great prophet gained no small influence over his royal master, particularly after the deliverance of Jerusalem; which, if less dramatic than the unlearned Bible-reader might suppose, was extraordinarily important for the future of the higher faith in God. It gave encouragement and it allowed a breathing-space. The histories tell us of reform carried out by Hezekiah upon Deuteronomic lines. This may be mainly an antedating of Josiah's work. When we look into the details of Josiah's reform, we cannot think that he was merely clearing away corruptions due to the pagan reaction under Manasseh. Many of the abuses described must have been age-long. How could there have been need or room for Josiah's action if Hezekiah had done the work already? Nevertheless, one instalment of iconoclasm ascribed to Hezekiah must be historical. He destroyed the brazen serpent 'which Moses made'—the original narrative may have been less edifying than what we now read at Numbers xxi—for '*unto those days* the children of Israel did burn incense to it' (2 Kings xviii. 4).

A much fuller programme of iconoclasm was contained in Deuteronomy, and acted on by Josiah. Thus we are bound to date Deuteronomy after the days of good King Hezekiah, who—when we examine the facts closely—does not seem to have known of its requirements, and before Josiah's reign. The last point is supported by one special argument. The provisions of Deuteronomy in regard to country priests were not in the interests of the priesthood at Jerusalem, who brought the book to light. There is the less ground for insinuating that the 'finding' of the book was a pre-arranged transaction. It might

well be, that, amid the confusions of Manasseh's reign, the manifesto of the reforming party was put in shape, but, upon the death or the exile of its leaders, was temporarily lost.

Deuteronomy is of considerable importance in the development of the doctrine of sin. It begins, or begins upon the great scale, the policy which ruled in the post-exile period. Sacrifice is not to be depreciated or ignored any longer. Sacrifice is to be regulated. Religion is not to be left upon the breathless heights, but is to be brought nearer the levels of common life. If one sanctuary alone is to be tolerated—that one sanctuary which a recent invader proved unable to insult—ritual may henceforth be in alliance with the claims of a spiritual morality. On the other hand it follows inevitably that spiritual and ceremonial duties stand henceforth upon the same footing. Both are parts of the code.

In another way, too, Deuteronomy is of significance for our doctrine. It fills a gap in the previous prophetic denunciations. How is it possible to hold that Israel as a nation has wilfully rebelled against God, or declined from higher things? It may still be easy for the thought of that age to assume that what the fathers had within their reach suffices to condemn the faults of the children. But *had* the fathers any real knowledge of those lofty ideals in whose light the prophets condemn later generations? If Deuteronomy is read as a piece of literal history, the fathers had this light, and the rebels are rebels indeed. The Decalogue, the Sh^{e}ma, the manifold detailed requirement of love to God—it is all in Deuteronomy. Well might King Josiah be terrified (2 Kings xxii. 11) by so exact a description of the faults of his people and age. Christian theology follows the lead of Deuteronomy, or betters its example, when it teaches that the first father of the whole human race had his probation in Eden, and that his Fall avails to condemn the whole of his posterity.

But when Christianity arose, the sense of racial unity had grown weaker, while that of individual responsibility had strengthened. Hence theology has been tormented by doubts regarding the grounds of imputation. No such doubts existed in those far-off days of which we are speaking.

There are affinities both of language and of thought between Deuteronomy and the great prophet whom we have next to mention—Jeremiah. More than this may be said. It is at least possible that the prophet (Jer. xi) made a tour through the country [1] in the interests of the words of that 'covenant.' But, if our prophet ever looked with hope to such lines of reform, he must soon have changed his mind. With all its threatenings, Deuteronomy is a very buoyant book. It is no mere preacher of sin or of judgment, like certain prophets. It sets before the people life as well as death. Nor is this simply an accident, due to the dramatic transference of the great discourse to the early days of the nation's innocence. The buoyancy of the book reveals the temper of mind in which the unknown reformers, working in the spirit and power of Moses, shaped their appeal. They hoped to regenerate Israel. And they achieved something; they introduced a temporary reform, and helped once more to secure a breathing-space for the little circle of God's true friends.[2] Yet in the end they seem to have inspired King Josiah with superstitious confidence in the value of external reforms. God must be on his side now, to defend the sacred soil against heathen trespassers! But, as so often, providence took the side

[1] This view was first made familiar in England, if not for the first time suggested, by Dr. Cheyne (Commentary, 1883; *Jeremiah, His Life and Times*, 1888); A. B. Davidson (*Theolog. Review and Free Church Colleges Quarterly*) referred to the suggestion in a tone almost of impatience. Recently Prof. Peake has mentioned it with little sympathy in his primer on *The Religion of Israel*. But his commentary (in the *Century Bible*) argues in its favour.

[2] Compare at an earlier date Isa. viii. 16—if that is the meaning of the verse.

of the big battalions. Egypt was victor; Josiah lost his life; and the reform party seemed to collapse.

In contrast with the buoyancy of Deuteronomy—dashed with fears, yet ever again emerging into the sunshine of hope—Jeremiah is even painfully depressing. He has come to be more afraid of sin. *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick* (xvii. 9). It is true that he announces no dogma of original sin. No fate, no natural necessity, forbids the nation to please God. But there is the second nature of engrained national habit (xiii. 23).

It was granted to Jeremiah to keep faith and hope alive in a few, and to wait for better days. He recognised God's will in the triumph of Babylon and the destruction of Jerusalem. Israel the nation might disappear. The pious 'remnant' of whom Isaiah had spoken might concentrate itself into hardly more than the single personality of Jeremiah. But personal religion, which had lain at the heart of the experience of all true prophets, was equal to this new and terrible demand. And so Jeremiah was able to record the prediction of a future better time, when God Himself would write His laws on the people's hearts,[1] and 'remember sin no more.'

Ezekiel[2] is the prophet of God's absoluteness. The effects of this belief coincide with those of his very dark doctrine of Israel's sin. (1) God's majesty requires the punishment of Israel in exile. (2) Eventually it will require —all unjustified by any merit in Israel—restoration for Israel and punishment for the heathen. (3) From the heathen nearer at hand, by whom Israel had at first been

[1] Dr. Peake regards the 'New Covenant' passage in chap. xxxi as Jeremiah's own. And surely it is too glorious a promise to be detached from the great prophet and assigned to some representative of the unknown epigoni.

[2] Habakkuk appears to be a prophet of Israel's wrongs rather than of Israel's faults.

deservedly chastened but afterwards insufferably wronged, punishment must extend to the furthest-off nations. They, too, must feel the strong arm of Israel's God. Thereafter, God may be all in all.

Along with this dogmatic emphasis on the evil of sin, we ought to notice the tenderness of Ezekiel's promises. There will be cleansing (xxxvi. 25), and a gift of the Holy Spirit to create, by God's own agency, the new personal religion of which Jeremiah (xxxi) had more briefly spoken. In the immediate future more influence is exercised by Ezekiel's scheme for land and temple (xl-xlviii). Plainly, this vision is one more stage towards that Priestly Code which dominates the post-exile period. Yet this hardening of outward forms was not incompatible with a real growth in spiritual life. The age of the Psalter—a book which echoes again and again so much of Jeremiah's gloom, but so much too of his intimate friendship with God—was the same age in which saintly men were zealous for the law and began to make a hedge about it.

In the Second Isaiah, the prophet of the Babylonian exile, Israel tends to appear as the wronged rather than the guilty one. Very deep chords are struck in the Servant passages, particularly—and this holds especially of sin—in the hymn of the suffering Servant, lii-liii. It is hard to explain under what conditions of the time, or with what proximate reference, these words can first have been spoken. They do not present themselves as a simple foreshadowing of sorrows yet to come; if they did, they might have been not so much a contribution to Messianic hope as a reconstruction of that hope from a more spiritual point of view. But the words seem to expound a contemporary moral event. Some would refer them to an individual sufferer, treated with the bold idealisation of poetry; perhaps Jeremiah; perhaps a king or prince like Zerubbabel or like Jehoiachin. Recent study revives an

old Jewish solution. The sufferer is none other than Israel, that relatively righteous nation, which endures wrong at the hands of the heathen in order that the heathen may benefit. To a theologian—may we not say to a Christian?—this could not be a welcome solution. Isaiah xl tells us that Israel has received 'double for all her sins.' Be it so; yet Israel had been guilty. Does excess of punishment turn the criminal into a martyr? What glory is it if, when we be buffeted for our faults, we take it patiently? If recent study is in the right, God led His people on from very unsatisfactory premises to very deep spiritual insights. They reached a doctrine of vicarious suffering on behalf of sinners, which the Old Testament never matches and the New Testament rarely quotes—all the more startling inasmuch as the suffering, if not the vicariousness, is reflected in several psalms. It seems as if in Psalm xxii we listened to the very voice, almost to the heart-beat, of the sufferer of Isaiah liii. There is a mystery here upon which, so far as the present writer can judge, historical and critical study has as yet thrown hardly any light.

Yet one thing is plain, and its importance could not be exaggerated. While the first work of the great prophets is to be preachers of righteousness and to denounce sin, they do not finish their task until they have learned and taught that the condition of Israel as it stands is hopeless, and that a better relation with God can only begin in a divine largesse of forgiveness.

CHAPTER III

IN THE PRIESTLY CODE AND THE LATER OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS

BETWEEN the period chiefly studied in our last chapter and the post-exile law more than one great factor intervenes. First we should mention the reaction in the age of Manasseh towards heathenism of a gloomy type, with a development or revival of terrible rites. While the prophetic party was in the strongest possible antagonism to the new heathenism, yet we ought to allow for unconscious influences emerging from the hated rival and diffusing gloom. But more important than anything in Manasseh's age was the tremendous fact of exile. The threatenings of the prophets had at length been completely fulfilled.

A third great influence was the personality of the priest-prophet Ezekiel. His great older contemporary, Jeremiah, was a priest too by birth; but he was not like Ezekiel a priest by his instincts. It has been thought by some that a priest and a prophet must have collaborated to produce the Deuteronomic code. If so, the mixture of the two currents became still more intimate when they embodied themselves in a single personality. Ezekiel's vision of the restored community hardly reads as if it could have been intended as a literal programme. Even those who reverenced his teaching replaced its impracticable letter by other codifications of priestly usage. But, in general tone and not a few details, Ezekiel appears as the inspirer of the new legal temper, preoccupied with sin and defile-

ment and with ritual purgations. A greater than he, the unknown prophet of Isaiah xl-lv, had also spoken words of hope, among which ritualism played no part. But the Deutero-Isaiah was to find his *goel* in Christianity. Ezekiel was the man of the nearer future, the father or at least the grandfather of Judaism.

The first method for getting rid of sin which one may quote from the Priestly Code is surprisingly archaic. It occurs, characteristically blended with others, in the ritual of the Day of Atonement (Levit. xvi). Critics have proved this chapter to be a comparatively late section in the Law,[1] but there can be no doubt that it incorporates a tradition of pre-prophetic and pre-ethical usages. Sin is transferred to the so-called 'scapegoat,'[2] and thus physically got rid of. A parallel occurs, in laws not of sin but of uncleanness; when a former 'leper'[3] is to be 'cleansed' and given back to his place in society (Levit. xiv), a living bird is released over running water to carry away his uncleanness. Possibly the running water itself is meant to serve the same purpose as the bird. In any case this ritual too is a complex in which several elements are blended.[4]

Once again we find something similar in the visions of Zechariah. It would not be fair to quote in this connection his vision of Joshua the High Priest stripped of 'filthy garments' and clothed with 'changes of raiment' (Zech. iii). A different symbolism, dealing with ideas of which we shall presently have to speak, predominates in that chapter—a symbolism of defilement and cleansing. Physical separation from sin, however, constitutes the sole imagery in another of Zechariah's visions, when 'wickedness' as a

[1] *E.g.* Zech. vii knows nothing of a great authoritative fast.
[2] A worse than doubtful translation.
[3] English readers should be warned against identifying the leprosy of the Bible with the dreadful disease to which modern medicine gives that name.
[4] Robertson Smith quotes a parallel Arabian usage (*Relig. Semites*, ed. 1907, pp. 422, 428).

female figure is carried off in a great dish out of the holy country into the land of the heathen oppressors. Zechariah may not believe in the possibility of literally exporting sin, yet the thought furnishes a natural symbolism to his vision. Earlier in the same chapter (Zech. v) we find the prophet using equally physical imagery regarding the removal of a 'curse.' After these few passages in post-exile law and prophecy this primitive mode of speech disappears, to meet us once more transfigured and glorified, in the conception of a divine 'Lamb' who 'takes away the sin of the world' (John i. 29; cf. 1 John iii. 5).

We pass on to an important complex of ideas of which we find less trace in early Old Testament codes than in later codes or early histories—the ideas of holiness and uncleanness. It is strictly correct to say that there are three conceptions to be dealt with here: what is holy; what is 'common' or neutral; what is unclean. Yet the triple grouping is not always maintained. In the language of the New Testament 'common' and 'unclean' are almost synonymous. And in primitive times—even more strangely, from our point of view—unclean and *holy* tend to run into each other.[1] For, in the absence of a developed morality and a higher religion, the two thoughts are both vaguely contained in the thought of what is taboo or 'uncanny.' Following Dr. Farnell,[2] Professor A. R. S. Kennedy[3] has noted three stages in the conception of the 'unclean.' First, and primitively, it is 'uncanny,' alarming, mysterious. At this stage the idea seems to be non-animistic and pre-animistic. Secondly, animism arises, and the strange processes of death, disease, and sex are referred to the presence and working of formidable spirits. Thirdly, a monolatrous or monotheistic religion, forbidding

[1] There is a curious repetition of this confusion in a later age when the Rabbis say that uncanonical scriptures 'defile' the hands. This, of course, is a mere coincidence in expression.

[2] *The Evolution of Religion*, lecture iii.

[3] 'Leviticus' in *Century Bible*, pp. 81, 82.

all religious commerce with spirits other than Jahveh, describes unclean states as incompatible with God's 'holiness.' The connection of such states with alien spirits may continue to be believed, or it may drop out of sight. In either case uncleanness, while a physical evil, was held to separate men from the spiritual God.

Perhaps at this stage the remark is anachronous; yet let us venture on it—we of later millenniums, in studying the primitive world, never can quite escape anachronism so long as we are our modern selves. A codified law, then, tends to become a list of arbitrary requirements. Its duties seem right simply because they are commanded, its sins wrong simply because forbidden. Bishop Butler has remarked shrewdly enough that the difference between a moral and a positive commandment is that one sees reason for the first and not for the second. The historical point of view requires us, without challenging that statement, to enlarge it. First, we recognise that the positive commandment is generally one whose original motive is forgotten. And secondly, perhaps, that the original motive is one which, could it be revived, would be unwelcome. There are times, however, when the contemporary mind discovers reasons of its own for traditional requirements. The Priestly Code—notably that early section known as H or the law of Holiness—presents to Israel a definite and coherent ideal of conduct: 'Ye shall be holy, for I your God am holy.' The ideal may be imperfect. Clay may be mixed with its iron, and dross with its silver. Yet it is much to have duty marked as a thing of coherent and intelligible principles, not a mere mass of details. And the thought of holiness points forward to the highest revelation of all, which, when it repeats the Old Testament formula, frowns upon nothing but sin.

The modern mind again is interested in the connection (or want of connection) between ceremonial impurity and physical dirt, or between ritual cleansing and literal

washing of the person. It is hardly necessary to insist that 'uncleanness' among primitive peoples has nothing to do either with æsthetics or with sanitation. If we must have a class name for it, we can only place it under the heading of 'superstitions,' although—as Darwinism insists—superstitions which are long-lived must either help or at the least not greatly hinder racial efficiency. After a certain point, the parallel between ritual and bodily uncleanness becomes unmistakable. We find this true in the Old Testament, and might no doubt verify it elsewhere. Possibly even a primitive mind might find a *quasi* religious and *quasi* moral significance in 'cleanness' technically so-called; certainly we moderns would be greatly at a loss if we might not employ this middle link of connection. Not all the passages in the Old Testament which praise 'clean hands' use the technical adjective denoting ceremonial cleanness; on the other hand, some of them do. So, too, in some cases at least, it is the physical offensiveness of dirt that becomes a parable of sin. The high priest in Zechariah iii was clothed in garments 'stained with excrement.' Even if we be asked to accept the far-fetched suggestion that excrement was dangerous because of opportunities it gave for magic,[1] or because of possible connection with spirits, there is more in the vision. Joshua is given clean garments. Surely this proves that the modern civilised point of view has at least a share in determining the prophet's imagery. Thus even the Old Testament teaches men in a sort of parable that sin is degrading—a lesson we still need.

On the other hand the 'ceremonial law' suffered from the defect of co-ordinating moral sins with unpleasant but inevitable incidents of bodily life, or of its close in death. In the period of the codified law, there was actual retrogression from the loftiness of the prophetic teaching.

[1] Compare commentaries on Deut. xxiii. 13.

Something was gained, when the law became master; much for the time was lost.[1]

It must be understood then that the laws which remove impurities are not strictly, even for the Old Testament consciousness, methods of dealing with sin. But first—even for the Old Testament mind—they are a parable, signifying or suggesting moral and religious cleansing. We see this in the anti-ritualist Psalm li.[2] Along with a purity 'whiter than snow' the singer prays for cleansing with 'hyssop' (v. 7). And when he asks for the creation of a 'clean'—technically 'clean'—heart within him (v. 10), the language may be ceremonial, but the thought is assuredly ethical. Secondly, the Old Testament law, while not making ceremonial defilement a sin, makes sin a species of ceremonial defilement, *e.g.* Leviticus xviii. 24 (H), 'Defile not ye yourselves' [with sundry moral and especially sexual corruptions]. And Leviticus xvi prescribes on the Day of Atonement a 'cleansing' of the altar (v. 19) and of the people (v. 30) by sacrifices. Similarly, sacrifices enter into 'almost'[3] all purificatory rites. In the region of externals, the modern counterpart to all these is the Christian ordinance of baptism.

We pass now to deal more directly with the greatest of all means by which the Priestly Code sought to get rid of sin—an expansion and elaboration of sacrifices for the sake of 'atoning.'

The Hebrew word 'atone' (or its cognates) occurs first

[1] It has been said by Robertson Smith that the use of water as a means equally for cleaning the person and for getting rid of ceremonial defilement may have initiated the process by which the two thoughts drew together. How then, asks the modern, did water come to rank as ceremonially purifying unless because physically it cleaned? The objection is natural, but not perhaps conclusive. Dr. Farnell suggests that liquids may have seemed suitable for ceremonial cleansing, because of their extreme mobility. If so, there was at first no prerogative in favour of liquids which wash well over others. To this day, in the symbolism of religion, blood outranks water as a means of cleansing.

[2] No sophistry will ever make it credible that the last two verses belong to the original structure of the Psalm.

[3] Heb. ix. 22.

of all not in the region of sacrifices but of fines. If the family of one who has met his death by manslaughter, as distinguished from deliberate murder, choose to accept a money compensation, they may do so; and such compensation bears the name of *kopher*, evidently a technical expression in this sense. Again, one pre-exile reference to offerings for 'sin' or 'guilt'—A. V., 'sin' and 'trespass'—speaks of sin and trespass 'money.'[1] It would be interesting to know whether these fines were called by the name of *kopher*, or were said to *kipper*. We have no information on the point.

In other directions we meet with the word, and curious associations arise. A *kopher* may be a bribe. If so, it is no expiation; but such a *kopher* is still, if less creditably, a means of escaping the disagreeable consequences of moral guilt, or of averting apprehended evil. So far as I am aware, we have no evidence of the existence of a true pardon in the jurisprudence of ancient Israel—of an irreversible executive act by which penalty is remitted. David's promise to Shimei does not guarantee Shimei against danger, arising at David's own instigation, under the next king. Yet forgiveness is interpreted among the Hebrews along the line of penalty; it is a waiving of penalties incurred. If we like we may call this Hebrew theory commercial. *Kipper* is one term—not of course the only term—for expressing what it is to forgive and to be forgiven. Unless Babylonian evidence is held to override the Hebrew evidence, we should (as Professor Moore says)[2] have no need to dabble in etymology, or to hesitate between Arabic and Syriac usages of cognate stems. Within the Old Testament it would seem plain enough that we are not to press the etymology, and that *kipper* had come to mean getting rid of an actual or anticipated evil, such as hostility or estrangement, by means of a *kopher*.

[1] 2 Kings xii. 16. Chronicles omits the statement.
[2] Art. 'Sacrifice' in *Encyclopædia Biblica*.

But, if the word 'atone' was not originally connected with sacrifice, a connection must have established itself in pretty early days. Whatever sacrifice meant independently of atoning—gift, communion, homage—sacrifices might also serve to reknit friendly relations with heaven, if these had been interrupted. 1 Samuel iii. 14 announces exceptionally that no *zebach* or *minchah*—the two commonest species of offerings—were to avail for the guilty house of Eli. Micah vi [1] discusses and dismisses the whole-burnt-offering—a sacrifice still of special weight in the book of Leviticus—however multiplied and exaggerated even to 'thousands'; then passes on, without discovering any hope of success, to the more dreadful offering of a human victim. In the dark days of Manasseh's cruel heathenism questions as to atonement must have forced themselves into prominence everywhere. Professor Moore thinks that *asham* must have come to be employed as the name of a sacrifice even before Ezekiel; this might explain the use of the word at Isaiah liii. 10. If we do not adopt this suggestion, it would be natural to hold that Ezekiel, with his engrossment in the problem of sin and his interest in ceremonial, added to the recognised list of offerings the two new kinds [2] of which we read for the first time in his pages. But we must not suppose that Ezekiel confined atoning functions to these. As he saw sin everywhere, so he recognised atonement everywhere in the sacrifices God graciously appointed. The Priestly Code is less emphatic; reference to atoning functions appears, disappears, reappears irregularly as we read through the sacrificial *toroth* at the beginning of Leviticus. But the meaning of the code is the same as Ezekiel's. Atoning virtue is still held to be a general property of sacrifices.

A divergent view of atonement, familiar to English

[1] This writer is still unacquainted with guilt-offerings and sin-offerings such as stand in the later sacrificial law.

[2] The distinction between sin- and guilt-offerings appears to be an archæological question, of no ascertainable importance for theology.

readers in Schultz's *Old Testament Theology*, was put forward by Albrecht Ritschl; that atonement was designed to safeguard creaturely weakness in God's presence, not to rectify the consequences of sin. It is true that Schultz softens the sharpness of the position by remarking, with good reason, that the Old Testament takes no trouble to contrast creaturely weakness and moral guilt. Ritschl is less inclined to blunt the edge of his novel assertion. It helps him towards that curious feature in his dogmatic system, the absence of recognition of a remedial aspect in the gospel of Christ.

Perhaps the most plausible argument in favour of this view is based upon the half-shekel. Its purpose (Ex. xxx. 12) is 'that there may be no plague . . . when thou numberest' the people. Though the word employed is different, this provision rightly recalls to us the 'pestilence' which is said to have punished King David's census (2 Sam. xxiv). Obviously the machinery by which a census might be rendered safe was an afterthought of piety,[1] though tradition characteristically groups it as Mosaic. Such a payment is no acknowledgment of sin. It would be a slander to hold that the Old Testament found a possibility of sinning safely by paying dues to the priests. What the law requires is timely recognition of the divine authority. It ordains a precaution; not a penalty, still less a bribe. Such a precaution would be suitably explained upon Ritschl's view of atonement. Yet on the whole it seems likely that *kopher* and *kippurim* are employed in this passage inexactly, with a larger reference than they properly bear. If so, the passage proves nothing as to the meaning of 'atone.'

Robertson Smith employs the word 'atone,' and cognates, of the primitive totemist or *quasi* totemist communion-meal which his theory places at the basis of

[1] Nehem. x. 32 must also be compared. The regulation of P C is later than that.

sacrifice. He does not I think tell us that *kipper* and *kopher* or *kippurim* are employed in regard to these early Semitic sacrifices; possibly no evidence on that point is available.[1] One is not criticising the great scholar in calling attention to this linguistic ambiguity; one is only trying to help readers through a labyrinth. There may be a piacular element in all primitive Semitic sacrifices *in the sense* that the sacrifice reknits by physical process the weakening bond of connection between the god and his human clients. The *word* 'atone' seems to emerge in the Hebrew language with different associations. It refers to wrongdoing—moral or ritual, voluntary or inadvertent—when such wrongdoing is confessed, made good, forgiven.

The study of atoning sacrifice inevitably raises for us the larger problem of the original meaning of sacrifice as such. It may be well to note the different elements which Robertson Smith's theory recognises.

First there is a gift or tribute. According to Robertson Smith this element is of minor importance. He holds that in early days it is confined to the *minchah* or vegetable offering, which he thinks was originally an offering of first-fruits, releasing the rest of the crop from taboo and making it available for human use. Other authorities hold that the confinement of *minchah* to vegetable offerings is a novelty in the Priestly Code. And certainly one would suppose that the *minchah* which King Saul was to make Jahveh 'smell' (1 Sam. xxvi. 19) would more naturally consist of roast flesh. In later ages, when the essential sacredness of the species of animals offered in sacrifice had been forgotten—when their totem character had quite disappeared—Smith recognises that the first stage even in the sacrifice of an animal is a ritual of consecration, making it over to God as His property and therefore holy.

[1] Unless Babylonian?

If a non-expert may express an opinion, it would appear that Smith's theory in this respect is at least upon the right lines. The gift-theory can hardly be the whole or even the central truth about sacrifice. Primitive man did not begin by developing the conception of a god as a personal or *quasi* personal spirit, then, when that task was finished, ask himself, 'How can I please such a being?' and proceed to the answer, 'Why, I 'll make him a present.' There must surely have been a rudimentary form of religion or of worship, however vague, growing in the primitive mind as a parallel to the rudimentary but growing conception of God. It is worth noting that, on Smith's theory, the gift element in the earliest sacrifice is not a mere gift. It has a mystical or magical efficacy, independently of its power of conciliating divine good-will. It releases the crops for human use.

The second element recognised by Smith in sacrifice—we assume animal sacrifice henceforward as the true type—is slaughter. On the old-fashioned penal-substitution view of sacrifice and atonement, attention ought to be focussed upon the victim's death. Nothing could be further from the truth. Death presents itself as a mere incident in a complex of more important parts. Again, the lay worshipper officiates, not usually the priest. Smith notices that in a few sacrifices there is emphasis upon the slaughter as performed 'before the Lord.' But not even in these cases does the victim's death appear outstandingly important or sacred.

Thirdly, the blood is manipulated. It is poured out at the foot of the altar; or it is applied to the altar's horns, or to parts of the worshipper's body. Leviticus xvii. 11 (H) tells us that the blood has specifically atoning quality 'because of the life that is in it'; but the *toroth* of Leviticus i etc., when they speak of several sacrifices as 'atoning,' make no special mention of the manipulation of the blood. What Leviticus xvii has in view remains

doubtful. The old translation 'maketh atonement for the *soul*' is grammatically false; still the assertion remains, that blood because it has a soul or a life in it makes atonement 'on behalf of your souls.'[1]

Fourthly, according to W. R. Smith, the earliest form of sacrificial meal was the consumption of raw flesh (as witnessed by Nilus among the heathen Arabs). It was supposed that the deity joined invisibly in this savage banquet. The pouring out of blood was introduced not mainly by advancing civilisation but from a superstitious fear of so peculiarly sacred a portion of the sacred carcase. Once the custom came in, it lent itself to the first faint beginnings of rationalism. It seemed less outrageous that the deity should consume liquids than solids, and the liquid was a mystical or magical quintessence of life. Yet surely Leviticus furnishes evidence that a new importance came to be attached to the atoning power of blood. Clearly theorised or left obscure, the new emphasis somehow arose.

Fifthly, part or all of the victim came to be burned. This also Smith would explain as due to primitive superstition. The one motive he recognises as operative when fire is first used in sacrifice is the desire to get rid of dangerously holy material. We see that motive at work in the (comparatively late) sin-offering, where bodies of victims not offered up on the altar are characterised as 'most holy'[2] and burned 'without the camp.' Once established, this custom lent itself to a further advance towards rationalism; God enjoyed the smell of the meat! That sufficed, without either eating or drinking, for the meal of a deity.

Lastly, when the use of raw flesh had become unthinkable, a sacred meal of cooked flesh was in many cases

[1] Professor Moore suggests that blood atones as a 'live' fluid, not a mere product of life like oil or milk, still less like water.

[2] A final blow to the penal-substitution theory. Had it been correct, such victims must have been most accursed.

partaken of by the offerers, while in the case of certain sin-offerings the priests as holier men represented the offerers in this function.

The whole complex process of animal sacrifice, as now traced out, has 'atoning' value ascribed to it. If we do occasionally find a vegetable *minchah* accepted from a poor man in lieu of any animal victim—'*almost*, all things are under the law purified with blood'—we need not set aside the rule that 'without shedding of blood remission does not take place.' The exception is permitted from a merciful motive, frankly as an exception. Part of the wonted complex may serve, in case of need, for the whole; just as Roman Catholicism justifies withholding the cup from the laity by teaching that the bread *per se* and the watered wine *per se* each becomes body and blood of the Saviour. The theory of Romanism is completer, but the result is the same—a part may replace the whole. The theological outcome of Smith's analysis would seem to be that for the Old Testament itself atoning sacrifice is an uncomprehended anachronism. There is no theory of its rationale before the mind of prophets or lawgivers.

Looking back from a Christian point of view, we must judge it to be a very noteworthy fact that the Levitical law did not attempt to re-establish national fellowship with God—interrupted by the exile in punishment of the nation's sin—by any ritual atonement. It was left for Christianity to point to one great and better sacrifice.[1] Over the renewed life of the community, around its rebuilt sanctuary, there still hung dark shadows of sin. Sin-offering is introduced into the Passover [2] by Ezekiel and after him by the Priestly Code. Elsewhere, too, sin-offerings appear again and again, notably 'once every year.'

[1] Even the prophets who spoke of the 'better covenant' did not know of the more perfect sacrifice.

[2] Fortunately we have no need to discuss the problem of the original meaning of the Passover. It *may* survive (in a sense) in the Lord's Supper.

But the offerings—even, it is probable, that of the great Fast day—are for minor offences. Both Deuteronomy and Priestly Code define sacrifice as a remedy for ignorance or weakness. A sin unto death has no means of expiation left it. Nor, when the nation has died in exile, does sacrifice renew its covenant. God 'does good in His good pleasure to Zion.' He pardons 'for His own name's sake.' One might even incline to confine 'sins of ignorance' to involuntary ritual lapses. If so, there would be in the matter no real sin 'as touching the conscience.' But a little inquiry shows that not a few tolerably deliberate acts of sin are brought under this rubric of involuntary transgression.

When we pass from the law to the Psalms and other writings, we find a significant absence of atoning sacrifices. Sacrifices of thanksgiving and the like are lovingly dwelt upon in many psalms, but not sin-offerings. And over against the group of sacrificial psalms we have to place the great anti-sacrificial three—xl l li. The first of these explicitly names *ḥaṭach* among the things which God did not desire. The third, while freely using the language of purificatory rites, tells us plainly that the only sacrifice welcomed from a sinner is that of a repentant heart. On the other hand, we must admit that not many psalms prolong these deep notes of penitence. Yet the note is enough in itself to discredit Duhm's disparaging theory regarding *e.g.* Psalm xxxii. Still a third group of psalms falls to be noted—those of self-confidence, almost of self-righteousness; xxvi xliv and others. For good or for evil, penitence fails to be the master chord in the psalter. At least it fails to rule out every discordant note. We find in Proverbs an ethical emphasis and a qualified disparagement of sacrifice,[1] but for hamartiology we must turn to the cynical rather than profound philosophisings

[1] *E.g.* xxi. 3.

of Ecclesiastes,[1] or to individual sayings in the Wisdom literature—sometimes perhaps glosses—such as Job xiv. 4.[2]

Peculiar importance belongs to the Book of Job in two respects. First, it definitely repudiates the theory that all suffering is penal. In a world of sin, much suffering is no doubt deserved—but not all. When the Old Testament had slowly learned to believe in a moral God exercising justice it was a great advance to learn the further lesson, that divine justice is not the only source of human sorrow. Secondly, this great book ends with a reassertion of the doctrine of human sinfulness upon more spiritual lines. In God's presence, Job, who silenced the calumnies of friend after friend, becomes no less immediately conscious of guilt than Isaiah: 'Now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.'

[1] vii. 20.

[2] W. R. Smith's later judgment is that the hamartiological teachings of sacrifice accomplished little (*Rel. Sem.*, pp. 424-5); contrast *Old Testament in Jewish Church*,[1] p. 382; somewhat modified, ed. [2], pp. 380-381.

CHAPTER IV

IN JUDAISM

THERE is no more startling change in the history of thought than when we pass from the general Old Testament doctrine of sin to the New Testament. We enter a new world. Many of its doctrinal presuppositions are not created by Christ or the apostles, but are accepted from the ideas of the land and the age. The sources of our information about these ideas are threefold. First, there are sundry late passages in the Old Testament which contrast with the general strain of its teaching. Secondly, there are the apocryphal and pseudepigraphic writings;[1] some of them are later than the New Testament, but may be regarded as representing older strata of belief. Thirdly, there are still later confirmations in rabbinical theology, as interpreted for us by experts. The main change has been stated in a few telling words by *Ecce Homo*: 'Man had come to consider or suspect himself to be immortal.' This discovery put the climax upon that process of individualising the doctrine of responsibility which is characteristic of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. A man could not be a mere part of his tribe if eternal destinies opened before the individual. Even if death should end all for the wicked—what a forfeiture, to lose eternal life! And, when eternal punishment came to be taught, the guilt of sin was proclaimed in new and startling characters.

[1] While epigraphy=the science of *in*scriptions, pseudepigraphy=the custom of falsely *as*cribing books to dead authors.

It has been debated whether we can trace a plea for personal immortality in the Psalms. The high authority of Dr. Charles still supports that belief, and places the 'doctrine of individual immortality' earlier than the hope of resurrection.[1] In the Psalter, however, there is on any view little connection with our subject.[2] The resurrection hope makes for the first time a definite doctrinal assertion. Early prophecies of death and subsequent revival (Hos. vi. 2; Ezek. xxxvii) are no more than metaphors of the nation's history. We meet with the literal hope in the apocalypse or apocalypses of Isaiah xxiv-xxvii and again at Daniel xii. 2, while the Book of Enoch seems to have implanted the new teaching in the general belief. The radicalism of Duhm and Marti, ignoring difficulties in regard to the growth of the Old Testament canon, places Isaiah xxiv-xxvii after the Maccabean rising, and therefore later than either Daniel or the earliest parts of Enoch. If we may assume an earlier date,[3] then Isaiah xxiv-xxvii first promises resurrection to the righteous dead, while Daniel xii. 2 knows of resurrection—with contrary results—in the case of some or many supremely godly and of some supremely wicked souls.

The Old Testament[4] had identified itself at the first with a very disparaging estimate of life after death. There was to be no absolute extinction, but a mere shadow of life in Sheol, far aloof from Jehovah. Personal identity seemed to belong to the body rather than the soul; hence immortality is conceived as bodily resurrection. Yet we must not expect to tie down any word, and least of all an eschatological term, to its etymological sense. Dr. Charles points

[1] Little can be proved from Psalms xvi and xvii. Psalms xlix and lxxiii seem to build hope for all the godly upon the legend of that Enoch whom God 'took.' Duhm finds the 'silent' prayer for immortality in the touching and submissive lines of Psalm xxxix. Might one add the closing verses of Psalms l and xci? What else, in their context, can they mean?

[2] Ps. xlix is the only one that may have a doctrine of supernatural penalty upon sin.

[3] So even Dr. Cheyne in *Encyclopædia Biblica*.

[4] Possibly from jealousy of ancestor worship; so Dr. Charles suggests.

out many usages.[1] Resurrection may be of soul alone—or of soul and body. It may occur before the Messianic kingdom, as a preparation for sharing in it—or after the kingdom, as a preparation for the glories of a world to come. It may lead on to deathlessness—or the happy risen dead, after participating in supreme joys, may die [2] once more. It may be confined to the righteous, for whom the religious postulate demands it—or it may satisfy ethics by applying both to righteous and wicked. The word resurrection does not long continue to suggest reinforcement of the few living saints by squadrons of the dead. It becomes more and more a synonym for immortality. Nor need the 'sleep' of the dead long have continued to imply literal unconsciousness.

We have spoken of the Messianic kingdom. It may be well to point out that belief in immortality arises—under the name 'resurrection'—in an age when belief in a personal Messiah is no more than a languid literary tradition. Good authorities agree that it was the spiritual failure of the Maccabean dynasty which called the older faith back into real life. Two different forms of the faith shape themselves. The Psalter of Solomon [3] hopes for a human king of David's line. The similitudes of the Book of Enoch [4] are definitely assigned, apart from isolated Christian glosses, to a pre-Christian period, and exhibit a new supernatural doctrine of the Messiah. He is heavenly and pre-existent; a view specially associated with the title 'Son of Man.' Both forms of Messianic doctrine adopt the resurrection hope; but in neither case is the connection more than external. 'Solomon' has a doctrine of resur-

[1] Even within the Book of Enoch. Dr. Charles has solid grounds in criticism—whether conclusive or not—for the rather small mincemeat he makes of his documents.

[2] Surely it is rather misleading, theologically, to call this 'second death' (Dr. Charles).

[3] Psalms xvii and xviii.

[4] Formerly known as 'The Book of Three Parables.' Since the present writer tried to deal with these questions twenty-four years ago, criticism has very materially cleared the issues.

rection (for the righteous alone) in Psalms which say nothing of the Messiah. Conversely, Psalms xvii and xviii say nothing of resurrection. And it is awkward when the heavenly being of 'Enoch' is said to bring immortality in so earth-bound a form as 'resurrection.'[1] The doctrine of an 'age to come' is a growth more native to the new eschatological piety.

If Isaiah xxiv-xxvii thinks of dead saints reinforcing the living, then resurrection within these chapters represents an immortality which has, in one sense, as little of the supernatural in it as it well could have. Elsewhere, however, these same chapters present to us a startling and bewilderingly novel doctrine—that of the imprisonment and ultimate punishment of the guilty angel princes. Here it is probable that foreign belief is at work. Early chapters in 'Enoch' try to support the new belief from the scrap of mythology at Genesis vi. 1.[2] Probably that is an awkward attempt to find biblical support for a borrowed dogma. The more dignified Fall-narrative of Genesis iii is thrust into the background in 'Enoch' by this fantastic development of Genesis vi. The beauty of women seduced angels,[3] especially Azazel.[4] There is no mention of Satan. When the wickedness of the age culminates in the Flood, the giants born of these intrigues are drowned, but their disembodied spirits still haunt the world as demons—surely a very eerie fancy. Thus 'Enoch' rather than Isaiah xxiv-xxvii gives us that conception of fallen angels which has passed through Jude and 2 Peter into Christian theology. In the New Testament epistles, these evil angels are still thought of as imprisoned. The Synoptic Gospels

[1] There *may* be Persian leaven in the resurrection doctrine. It need not have been so.

[2] Or, as some think, from a longer version of the myth which has failed to survive.

[3] Though that is not the name.

[4] The demon of Leviticus xvi. Again, probably, Old Testament material is being forced to support new dogmas.

reveal a belief in demons—however related to these incarcerated spirits—as the authors of mental and nervous disease. In the Pauline epistles[1] we have still another conception. Spiritual powers—evil beings, or at the best morally neutral—impose themselves on human worship. They are associated with the forces of nature and with the Old Testament law.

In speaking the name Satan we return to the Old Testament. A possible though questionable antecedent for this doctrine may be recognised in the belief in mischievous spirits sent out from God. In Job, and in Zechariah iii, we have the word itself. In these passages Satan is a title. He is 'the adversary,' the impersonation of God's severer dealings. But in 1 Chronicles xxi. 1 Satan has dropped the article, become (as in the New Testament) a name, and means that supremely wicked spirit who tempts men to sin. Even in the New Testament Satan is still conceived as the author of disease (Luke xiii. 16; 2 Cor. xii. 7), and again as a prosecuting counsel before God (Rev. xii. 10; comp. Rom. viii. 34). The LXX translate uniformly by διάβολος:[2] and this Greek form yields to Mohammedan theology the Arabic *Iblis*, to Christian doctrine the English 'devil' and its cognates. Our translators are not to blame if at times they use devil for δαιμόνιον also. (Compare Deut. xxxii. 17,[3] Ps. cvi. 37, Tobit. vi. 7, 17, Ep. Baruch iv. 7). 'Thou hast a *daimonion*' is and is meant to be a blasphemous insult. The word has grown really synonymous with devil. Yet it is a peculiar infamy for Judas that he—not has a *daimonion*, but—is a Diabolus (John vi. 70).[4]

[1] Gal. iv. 3, 9; Col. i. 20; ii. 18; 1 Cor. ii. 8.
[2] Compare Wisdom ii. 24.
[3] Sacrifices to *Shedim*—primitive fiends.
[4] Beelzebub or Beelzebul 'the prince of demons' appears in two or three New Testament passages, Belial or Beliar in one.

There was no original connection between the devil and hell, closely as we associate them. We have just noted how 'Satan' and its translation 'devil' arose. There may have been foreign influences at work. The word hell—Gehenna—is unmistakably native. To begin with, it is a geographical expression. The valley of Hinnom or of the sons of Hinnom lay beneath the walls of Jerusalem, joining the gorge of the winter-torrent Kidron. Next, the valley gained evil associations from the sacrificing of children to the royal or 'king' god of Semitic heathenism —Melech; the pious spitefulness of later Jews wrote the word with the vowels of *bosheth*, 'shameful thing,' and possibly substituted that word for the name. Foreigners ignorantly reading the text learned to say *Molech*. Thirdly, the whole is supernaturalised, and affords a name or symbol for the region of punishment in a future world. Burning or smouldering refuse, carcases left to the worm or thrown on the funeral pyre—such burial or cremation prolonged indefinitely is an emblem of never-ending destruction. It is thought that we have this picture at Isaiah lxvi. 24, a verse which recent criticism finds several reasons for regarding as a late editorial addition to the book. Dr. Charles finds Gehenna again at Daniel xii. 2.[1] The worm and the fire reappear before the New Testament at Judith xvi. 17, expressly of eternal torment. 'Enoch' speaks of 'the cursed valley.' *Gehenna* in Greek occurs first[2] in the New Testament references.

The educated reader need not be cautioned against confusing hell as rendering of Hades or Sheol with hell as Gehenna, the place of torment. And yet connections arise in theological development. When 'Enoch' offers the first apocalyptic visions of the unseen and future world, he introduces us to places of provisional punishment in Hades for evil souls—a quasi-hell leading on

[1] In both passages we have the word *deraon*; perhaps a technical term.
[2] So far as the writer knows or believes.

inevitably to the true and never-ending hell. Again, resurrection may be conceived, in one of its forms, as delivering the righteous out of Hades and leaving the wicked behind. It is not yet taught that the prison of wicked angels[1] is also the prison of lost human souls. The end, after the judgment, is conceived as a casting of guilty angels and men into a lake or furnace of fire 'prepared for the devil and his angels' (Matt. xxv. 41). This is described at Revelation xx. 14 as the 'second death.' The merciful thought of ultimate destruction may be contained as it is certainly suggested in these words.

From these pictures of punishments projected into a future life we turn to speak more exactly of the concomitant doctrine of sin.

It hardly needs remark that the new age confesses the universality of sin. That confession stands as early as 1 Kings viii. 46—a Deuteronomic passage, but assigned to the period of exile; it is repeated of course in the echo 2 Chronicles vi. 36. In the irreligious orthodoxy of Ecclesiastes—orthodox according to the standard of its age—the admission again occurs, made with the smallest possible trace of emotion (vii. 20).

A firmer dogmatic basis is supplied to this empirical generalisation in the recognition that death is universal, coupled with the belief that death is the wages of sin. On the whole, this is not an Old Testament doctrine. In particular, it is not the original meaning of Genesis iii. Whatever the antecedents of that story,[2] it stands in the Old Testament as an explanation not of death but of hard 'labour,' masculine and feminine. The threat of immediate death is cancelled by divine indulgence, in recognition of the fact that the serpent was guiltiest and most to be punished, woman the next guiltiest, man guilty only in a minor

[1] Called at 2 Peter ii. 4 by the classical name Tartarus.
[2] W. R. Smith and others hold that the serpent was originally a demon.

degree. The cause of these sorrows is a single act of sin; but, in the primitive document J, or even in our composite Book of Genesis, no great emphasis attaches to this first sin.

A change must begin as soon as the hope of immortality asserts itself. It would be possible indeed to combine immortal hopes with a persuasion that death is innocuous. Such a point of view is essentially modern. In a sense—on the pre-supposition that the innocuousness of death is due to Christ—it is characteristically Christian. But for Hebrew thought a different inference was almost unavoidable. Immortality being man's claim, death ought never to have entered the world. Death was unnatural. It must be penal. It is one of the anomalies of history that Sirach, who (xxv. 24) first[1] with any clearness asserts that death is penal, has not surrendered the old doctrines of Sheol and of punishments and rewards in this life for any more supernatural conceptions. Whatever merits he possessed, Sirach was no thinker. He reinterprets Genesis iii in the light of the spirit of his age; but he goes no further with the new thoughts.

It is possible, though scarcely certain, that within the Old Testament itself we have reverberations of the Fall story and of the penal conception of death. Two Psalms claim to be considered—the Psalms of the Anglican Burial Service, xxxix and xc. Duhm recognises in both of these the dogmatic reading of Genesis iii. In the case of Psalm xc, at any rate, it is hard to resist his conclusion. To argue that premature death is peculiarly in view is to do violence to the language. A colder and more prosaic reference to the dogmatic view of death is probably to be recognised in a passage from the priestly historian, Numbers xxvii. 3.

The technical term 'Fall'[2] occurs at Wisdom ix. 1, but with little of the sombreness of later theology. Adam

[1] First among the documents we possess.

[2] παράπτωμα.

fell indeed, but wisdom put him on his feet again. 'Fall' occurs again in 4 Ezra; in the Latin text the word is *casus*. Later theology preferred *lapsus*; hence 'supra-lapsarianism' and other terms of that group.[1]

A second question regarding the Fall is whether Adam's misdeed affected nature. Genesis iii in a sense decides the question. Adam's sin was the first cause of weeds; so the story assures us. Sundry fantastic and not very important enlargements or corollaries of this assertion occur in different documents of Judaism.[2] The most dignified of all such references is St. Paul's, at Romans viii. 20. The sad case of the world which the Book of Ecclesiastes so deplores—'vanity of vanities, all is vanity'—was no part of nature's original constitution, but has resulted from Adam's sin.[3] Before that day, death was unknown. Since that day, all living creatures are subject to the doom of death—until another mysterious hour, when the sons of God are to be revealed, and nature itself will share their redemption.

Thirdly, is there transmission of a guilty nature from Adam and Eve to their offspring? We shall meet this perplexing problem once again in connection with St. Paul. So far as the Jewish mind is concerned, it certainly emphasises the connection of Adam's transgression with the reign of death through the ages rather than with the reign of sin. This hardly supports the view that original sin was a pre-Christian doctrine. There is a possible exception in the case of the Apocalypses of (the Syriac) Baruch and Ezra. They are post-Christian, but of course entirely non-Christian. Their new tone is to be explained

[1] Why will not scholars recognise that the first step in elucidating any doctrine is to get upon the track of the words which it stamps as technical? Innumerable other steps must follow if we are completely to understand—so far as we ever may—our predecessors' thought. But, if we neglect the study of words, we never even begin our task.

[2] An index of references will be found at p. 247 of Dr. Tennant's *Fall and Original Sin*.

[3] Whether the ὑποτάξας is Adam or his God, or even his tempter, Adam's sin is made to rank as of decisive importance.

not from Christian influences, but from the tremendous blow of the fall of Jerusalem. Once again calamity deepens the sense of guilt; and speculation tries now to grasp the whole terrible truth. Still 'Baruch' reassures himself that every man is 'the Adam of his own soul' (liv. 19). One passage in his book (xlviii. 42, 43) is hard to reconcile with the general strain of his teaching. Dr. Charles has recourse to the knife. He supposes interpolation. Dr. Tennant hints hesitatingly at inconsistency in the writer's thought. If that be the solution, we might have to grant that Baruch for once teaches original sin. In 'Ezra' the minor key sounds throughout, more even than in Baruch. Yet it appears probable that not even this dejected writer[1] holds that Adam has transmitted a tainted nature. The central doctrine of the Jewish schools in regard to human corruption is the doctrine of the evil *yetzer*; and it seems certain that 'Ezra' thinks along these lines.

We have therefore to turn to this other formula: indwelling sin as due to the *yetzer hara* in the human heart. The phrase is borrowed from Genesis vi. 5, viii. 21. These passages prepare us for a greater emphasis in Jewish theology upon inward evil in man than upon inward good. Weber's well-known book on Talmudic teaching seems to have misled opinion. Our foremost authority, Professor Paton of Yale, offers correction on two points. First, it is not true that the Rabbis habitually recognise a good *yetzer* alongside of the evil 'seed in the heart.' Such co-ordination is late and secondary.[2] Secondly, the Talmud does not point to Adam's sin as originating or even *as strengthen-*

[1] According to some there are several documents to disentangle in 4 Ezra.

[2] Yet this hardly seems settled beyond question. Dr. Tennant (pp. 116, 143 note), finds two *yetzers* in the Testament of Asser, in the Slavonic Enoch, and possibly at Sirach xxxiii. 14, 15, all comparatively early authorities. Could they fail to affect some of the Rabbis?

ing the evil impulse in humanity.[1] The Hebrew fragments of Ecclesiastes show that the word is used by Sirach, and careful study of many passages in the book has led to the conclusion that sometimes at least the term is as technical with him as with the Rabbis. Plainly, therefore, this doctrine is pre-Christian and pre-Pauline.

In 'Baruch' we should seek for it in vain[2]: that apocalyptist desires to encourage his people rather than to dwell upon depressing doctrines. In 4 Ezra the case is different. There the doctrine stands, and the author laments loudly at the thought of it; but he does not seem to seek relief from an 'unintelligible world' by the doubtful method used in much Christian theology—by extending Adam's blame till it accounts for evil impulse and beyond all question exonerates God. For all that appears, the evil nature—perhaps we should rather say the tempting principle—ranks for Judaism as part of God's original creation of man.

Lastly, we have to note how the theology of Judaism sums up consistently in favour of freewill and the possibility of self-salvation. In late days this came to be a matter of deliberate choice as against the Pauline traditions of Christianity; just as, in modern centuries, Romanism loudly champions freewill against early Protestant orthodoxy. Perhaps it is true that Deuteronomy and Ezekiel, while not strictly formulating the problem, point towards a libertarian solution. According to Josephus, the Sadducees asserted freewill without any belief in 'fate'—or providence?—and the Pharisees maintained it at least in certain cases, the Essenes alone excluding it. Similar belief in freewill shows itself in Sirach, and again in the praises bestowed upon 'Wisdom' in the book of that name. The Psalter of Solomon has one important passage[3]

[1] The last possibility, which Weber ascribed to Talmudic writers, Dr. Charles finds in 4 Ezra. Others doubt Dr. Charles's interpretation.
[2] Even perhaps at xlviii. 42, 43; *supra*, p. 53. [3] lx. 7.

which either iterates and reiterates free-will, or else, upon a different interpretation[1] of a contested reading, asserts freedom along with an antithetic assertion of divine predestination, much like a well-known saying from the *Pirke Aboth*. One peculiarly impressive statement of freewill occurs in Philo; it must not be set aside by precarious inferences based upon other passages.[2] The Slavonic Enoch is quoted in a similar sense.[3] 'Baruch,' as we have already seen, throws the weight of its emphasis upon this hopeful doctrine, and even 4 Ezra, in defiance of its own predispositions, teaches that after all man is free. Logically or illogically, with or without hesitation, Judaism with hardly one dissentient voice moves along the line of opinion which in Christianity we call Pelagian.

Accordingly, however intensified the gravity of sin for the theologians of Judaism, they found counterbalancing considerations, and—with the possible exception of 4 Ezra—made them decisive. Hell is in prospect for vast numbers of human beings, but only through the fault of each individual.

[1] Noted as possible by Ryle and James. Other editors seem to confine the assertion to freewill; and one may venture to agree with the majority.
[2] Compare the discussion in Drummond's *Philo*. i. p. 347.
[3] Compare Dr. Tennant, pp. 143 note, 207 note.

CHAPTER V

IN JOHN THE BAPTIST

'THE Christian Church sprang from a movement which was not begun by Christ.' These opening words of *Ecce Homo* remind us of a figure whom we can by no means ignore. If Jewish theology is among the pre-suppositions of Paulinism, the Baptist more directly leads on to the teaching of Christ. More than this may be said. Whatever be the origin of Christian baptism—a somewhat perplexed question — we cannot wholly detach it from John's rite. In a sense therefore the Baptist might be called the founder of one of the Christian sacraments. It is unfortunate that we know so little about the detail of his teaching, and that the most of that little comes to us through the Gospels, with danger that the Christian point of view may disturb the original meaning. Still, we may hope to discern certain broad outlines. The eschatological and apocalyptic bias of primitive Christianity, to which so much notice is now being given, was Johannean before it was Christian.

The Baptist rises into our notice [1] as a successor of the old prophets. This holds, it would seem, even of externals; he wears the prophetic mantle. What is more important is that it holds of internal things. He is a prophet on the great scale, speaking with the authority of God, and claiming obedience from the nation. Of course he is apocalyptic as his predecessors were not. He speaks out

[1] Apart from the striking but possibly legendary narrative of Luke i.

of the clear belief in immortality and resurrection, and he knits up that general faith with an intenser supernaturalism by proclaiming that final judgment is close at hand—not through a foreign enemy or any other working of historical factors, but by a sharp cessation of the way of the world and God's immediate intervention. All this passes on into the teaching of Christ and the apostles.

In this lurid light of judgment, one thing is everywhere revealed. Sin is at the centre of the message. As definitely as any prophet of the days when Samaria or Jerusalem was tottering to its fall, John declares that he is sent by God to a guilty people. The age-long discipline of the law has achieved little or nothing towards satisfying this moral censor or the God for whom he speaks. Pharisees may hope to secure at least an inner circle of punctually obedient lives, whose merit is to win from God the supreme boon of the Messianic intervention. John thinks differently, and thus serves as a forerunner to the teaching of Jesus. In another respect he anticipates our Lord by his preference for conscious and confessed sinners over supposed saints. He attracted the multitudes. He cannot have incorporated in the circle of his professed disciples nearly all who were baptized. They came to him as sinners, received his rite with its promise of forgiveness, then returned to their ordinary callings, there to await the crack of doom. It was not for nothing that the Baptist spoke as a later successor of the great if sometimes anonymous prophets, who formulated a message of forgiveness. He individualises as the prophets of ancient Israel could hardly have done. But, while he sees sin resting heavily upon each and all, he has a promise of mercy for every one who repents. As the rites of the law washed away physical uncleanness, God through John gives the pledge of deliverance from the uncleanness of sin.

The question has been raised whether John's baptism was not in its essence an eschatological sacrament, perhaps

even a guarantee of safety in the coming judgment for all who submitted to it. Whether we call it a sacrament or not may be largely a question of words. It was an institution unparalleled in the history of the Old Testament prophets, and would naturally awaken curiosity and jealousy among the religious leaders of the people. The Sadducees could not relish it. Pharisee lawyers had long elbowed them aside in popular estimation, but had never interfered with priestly claims—were even zealots of the law; now a new religious rite was being instituted in Israel! 'By what authority?' Yet the people were convinced that John was a prophet, and it did not do to break with the people. It is credible that even Sadducees should have come to John's baptism.

Had John not lived in an age of sacraments, it is not likely that he would have clenched his teachings by a new external observance. In his own land, with whatever differences, the Essenes had accustomed men to the thought of *quasi*-sacramental washings. Even more resemblance might exist between John's baptism, given as it was once for all, and the usages practised when a proselyte was received into Judaism. And yet the Baptist's message and ordinance contained something generically novel. John baptizes those who repent, just because he is an eschatological herald. The man who has seen the Judge drawing near has authority to impose a new rite.

But, when we are asked to regard John's baptism as intended to guarantee salvation, belief is impossible. This is a peculiarly pungent moralist. Did he propose to heal the spiritual hurt of his people so slightly, with a bath? John passes sentence upon the whole dispensation of the old covenant. It has resulted not in a cleansed or consecrated but in a guilty people—as far from God as the despised 'sinners of the Gentiles.'[1] Did he think that a new rite was the appropriate remedy? Again, his baptism

[1] Is this the reference at Matt. iii. 9 (Luke iii. 8)?

is a mere preliminary. The real baptism, however we interpret it, is to be administered by higher hands. Once again : the great successor of John is to exercise judgment. It is his fan that is to separate wheat from chaff. Could a forerunner anticipate that office ? Those who came to John's baptism took the right step, and turned their faces towards God's salvation. Only God or His Anointed could guarantee salvation itself ; only at the judgment could that guarantee be given. Assurances in advance were impossible. Least of all could externals avail to make men secure.[1]

Christian teaching, credibly ascribed to our Lord Himself, recognises John as the promised Elijah. This was an expectation that might have been created for the purposes of Christian apologetic. Elijah is looked for—and John has duly appeared ; a great one, but with a subordinate greatness. The chief Christian perplexity may be the assertion that the Baptist declined the identification.[2] Perhaps this was part of John's recoil from the defects of his age. Other prophetic minds of that day wore the mask of some man of older times, and slipped into circulation a book bearing his name. John was John—no ghost stealing back to earth, but a living man conveying a message of present urgency from the living God.

With perverse ingenuity, Albert Schweitzer has suggested that John was looking forward to the real Elijah, and that his message to Jesus (Matt. xi, Luke vii) meant, not Are you Christ ? but Are you Elijah ? Verbally, ' the coming one ' might point to either of the two great figures. But, on Schweitzer's own admission, the answer sent by Jesus conveys no meaning at all if it is taken as a reply to the question ' Are you Elijah ? ' And, if either predicted personage could slip out of the Baptist's eschatological

[1] Thus far the early Christian assertion may be true, that John's baptism did not convey forgiveness.

[2] John i. 21, supported by silence elsewhere.

programme, it was easier for the Elijah Redivivus to disappear than for the Christ. St. John could hardly be so heretical a theologian or so critical a scholar as to challenge belief in the Messiah. All the contemporary Jewish world, founding upon scriptures which he reverenced as much as any, held that God's supreme and final intervention must take place through a Messianic king.

In one of our Gospels we have a sermon of John's (Luke iii. 10-14) dealing with details of moral duty. If we may accept this record as historical, we find it surprisingly moderate in its claims. The teacher whom it reveals has nothing of the fanatic about him. Soldiers are still permitted to be soldiers; the very tax-gatherer may continue to gather taxes—honestly. Only the superfluities of life are to be unsparingly cut down for the relief of the poor. Such teaching contains few stones of stumbling. It has no trace of the searching moral originality of Jesus, or of His daring paradoxes. In these homely details, John appears as the moderate and Jesus as the extremist.

It remains to say something regarding the relations of this remarkable man to Jesus.

Our Gospels tell us with a scarcely qualified unanimity [1] that Jesus was baptized by John. We shall have to speak in our next chapter of the significance of the event in the life of our Lord; here we must study the fact as it concerns the Baptist. If we believe the testimony of the Gospels, that Jesus had a special experience of God at the time, and if we further believe that John was God's true prophet, it will seem natural and probable that John should have had some inkling of what passed. And such prophetic insight will explain, as nothing else can, John's subsequent message to Jesus.

But before we draw our conclusions, we have to face

[1] John's gospel does not say so explicitly, but is most naturally interpreted as presupposing the event.

the radical hypothesis, that the baptism of Jesus is legend and not fact. Is such invention conceivable? Was it not awkward for Christianity,[1] so long as John's disciples had any separate organised existence, to have to admit that the lesser master had baptized the greater? Might it not even seem to rank Jesus as a sinner? Again, how could Jesus fail to contemplate and consider submitting Himself to baptism? He could not be indifferent to John's work. He could not be neutral. For Him it was plainly 'from heaven.' In the end it must have been revealed to Him as God's will that He also should be baptized by the prophet.[2]

When Jesus began to teach, His message, irrespectively of the veiled implication of Messiahship, differentiated itself promptly in several respects from that of the predecessor whose words it so often reiterated. First of all, it is surely significant that the teaching of Jesus made itself felt as good news. There was plenty to suggest this in the Old Testament, notably in 2 Isaiah and in kindred Psalms. But the Baptist was out of tune with such joyfulness. We can hardly imagine any one describing John's preaching as the gospel of the Kingdom of God. Such Old Testament gospels, like many of the great messages of Old Testament scripture, lived anew in more than their former power in the teaching of Christ. Again, we are told that the disciples of John like those of the Pharisees fasted, but not the disciples of

[1] Matt. iii. 14, 15, whether historical fact or legendary accretion, may serve as a proof.

[2] Jewish theology expected Elijah to anoint the Messiah. But there is no hint of that motive in the New Testament. It is God who 'anoints Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power.'

It does not seem possible to vindicate as historical the statement of the Fourth Gospel, that the Baptist described Jesus as the Lamb of God who should take away the sin of the world. That is the theology of the Christian Johannine school; compare 1 John iii. 5. It is characteristic of the Gospel of John to ignore historical perspectives, and to discover the highest truths at the very first moment when an instalment of truth is broached. In this instance the Baptist is credited with the loftiest view of the death of Jesus which the whole of the Fourth Gospel contains.

Jesus.[1] Jesus Himself contrasts the manner of His coming, 'eating and drinking,' with the appearance of John, 'neither eating nor drinking.' While the one teaching distils essential gloom, the other breathes essential joy. Was it not the thought of God that made the difference? *When ye pray, say Father.* John with all his greatness could not have spoken these simple words.

It fell to John in his 'way of righteousness' to rebuke the vice of Herod Antipas and Herodias. Their alarm and indignation relieved the Jewish leaders of the task of dealing with John. He passed into imprisonment, and was not allowed to emerge alive. From prison [2] he sent to ask Jesus, having heard of 'the works of the Christ,' 'Art thou he that should come? or must we look for another?' The unspoken request can hardly be missed. *If thou art king, rescue this thy servant!*

It is supposed by some that this was dawning faith. Mighty works such as Jesus was doing suggested the possibility that Jesus was the destined king. The underlying presupposition would be, *His coming must be very very near.* Yet it hardly seems as if anything heard about Jesus or His miracles could have suggested such faith to the Baptist's mind *for the first time.* Nor does Jesus' answer seem what we must expect if He was in the presence of so sacred and delicate a thing as dawning faith.

On the other construction everything tallies. John had shared the paradox of faith—*here* is the king! After a time he hears of Jesus; doing what? Preaching. Now, himself a prisoner, he hears not of preaching alone but more and more of mighty works. He had done no such signs.[3] Why may the works not avail for his help in his great need? Why should God's king let wickedness thrive unchecked? Apt reply is given in quotations

[1] Can the fine sentence Mark ii. 20 (and parallels) be a piece of early Church theology? Compare the standardising of fasting in the *Didache.*
[2] So Matthew (xi) asserts, and Luke (vii) permits.
[3] So John x. 41 and the general argument *e silentio.*

from Old Testament prophecy which describe Jesus' distinctive Messianic mission; in the appeal for a faith that will not 'stumble'; and perhaps in the gentle condemnation which such an appeal implies, and which tends to counterpoise the immense praise of John addressed to the multitude.

CHAPTER VI

IN THE LIFE AND WORDS OF CHRIST

If Christian faith is justified in essentials, the relation of Jesus to sin cannot be studied wholly within the teaching He gives. We must seek to divine His personal experience. And, high as such experience ranks in a Jeremiah or a St. Paul, it must rank still higher when it meets us in the Son of God.

This does not mean that we are to impose on the teaching of the Master foregone conclusions regarding His person. In the last resort we can accept nothing regarding Christ or salvation which is not guaranteed by Christ's own words. And we must follow these words wherever they lead. In particular, we must deal frankly with the eschatological and apocalyptic elements in the thought of Christ. Very probably discussion in the end will establish little or nothing new regarding central things. It is not likely that the light of the world has been lost to us by misapprehension of certain strange time-conditions under which that light shone forth, still less that He will cease to be our light when the time-conditions are allowed for. Yet it is our duty and (as duty is wont to be) our highest interest to search this matter to the bottom. The barrenness of much writing upon Christ's doctrine of the Kingdom is probably due to a false varnish of modernity in the interpreters. Those whom the eschatological view has intoxicated may exaggerate quite as badly; no matter, we cannot evade the

subject. And, as things at present stand, even a brief monograph upon a single theological topic must define its own attitude upon questions of the life of Jesus.

Regarding our Lord's early years we have as good as no information; two divergent accounts of birth and infancy; one anecdote of great beauty in Luke ii. When Jesus passes into the circle of light He is a man (Luke iii. 23), attracted like so many others by the Baptist and submitting to the Baptist's rite. Immediately on this follows the narrative of temptation. It in turn is quickly followed by the beginning of a public ministry. We have to ask what can be inferred from this combination of facts —Baptism, Temptation, Preaching.

We have already given reasons for holding that the baptism of Jesus by John is history and not legend. Here let us add that the Temptation-narrative reinforces our conclusion. It is hard for Christians to accept the thought that Jesus did not know His Messiahship till so advanced an hour. He has been supposed [1] to have perceived His sinlessness, and to have inferred even in youth the truth of His essential Divine Sonship. Or He is supposed [2] to have been conscious of Divine Sonship as early as He was humanly conscious at all. Yet the Baptism-narrative clearly implies that Jesus had previously been unself-conscious—unaware of Messiahship, and *a fortiori* of sinlessness and of unique divinity. Here the Temptation-narrative speaks its confirmation. Had Jesus been previously ready for His ministry, there would seem to be no special point at which temptation could assail Him. But, if unsuspected truth has burst upon Him, His first need is to face His task in solitude. He emerges again with a clearly defined programme, *i.e.* with definite assurance what is and what is not God's will for Him.

[1] So B. Weiss, *Life of Christ*, tr. i. p. 302.
[2] So Dr. Stalker, but not without hesitation.

Such an account of the development of events is self-consistent and impressive.[1]

On the other hand, some critical students decline to make room for Messianic consciousness in the mind of Jesus so early as this, if at all. Little as we may relish the task, we must try to understand how things shape upon these presuppositions. Jesus then, we are told, is not said to *discover* His Messiahship but to *become* Messiah by the descent of a divine potency. The whole is early Church theology, yielding no light as to the development of Jesus of Nazareth. Not less unhistorical, they add, is the Temptation. Its narrative makes use of old traditional material, some of it perhaps mythical, parallel to, possibly influenced by, the legend of the Buddha's temptation. There is not even a nucleus of fact. The circumstance that two narratives—Baptism and Temptation—support each other is a pure accident, significant of nothing. Jesus (they continue) began to preach when John was put in prison. He could not bear that the work of heralding the approaching judgment should be hampered. *Uno avulso non deficit alter*; God's work was to go on, and that upon a grander scale than if it must fall into the weak hands of John's disciples. Jesus the prophet was just John the prophet, repeated with modifications. His Messiahship, if He ever believed in it, was a precarious and questionable afterthought. Possibly the Master accepted the programme from Simon Peter. It was conceivable! He *might* prove to be Messiah Himself!

To this one replies that honest study of the Gospels

[1] We assume the originality of the record in Mark and Luke—even Matthew has traces of it: 'Thou art,' not, as at the Transfiguration, 'This is [my Son].' We further assume the significant combination of the Messianic Psalm ii with the first of the Servant passages, Isa. xlii. 1. 'This day I have begotten thee,' read by some text authorities in Luke, might mean, as in the Psalm, 'I hereby adopt thee.' But is it not the commonest of all errors in quotation to carry a quotation too far? While, if Adoptionism possessed adherents in the early Church, theological bias might concur to create the unfortunate reading.

shows Messianic consciousness everywhere underlying Christ's words and acts. Of the radical critics, some have room for the great moral prophet but not the Christ. Others have room for the apocalyptic herald, perhaps the apocalyptic Christ, but not for the prophet who represents God to the conscience. The Christian Church rightly stands for both. Jesus is prophet indeed, but Jesus is also Lord. The apocalyptic element is no mere antiquarian curiosity, even to-day. To His own thought Jesus belongs to a higher order than that of earth.

Reaffirming our acceptance of the narratives, we next ask: How could Jesus, being what faith declares Him, and what He learned at baptism that He was—how could He be unconscious of His uniqueness through youth and up to full manhood? It is a partial answer that Jesus was clothed in humility, and therefore more conscious of God than of self. A further if less inward answer may be found in the eschatological prepossessions of the age. What if Jesus Himself had thought of the Messiah as one who was to descend from the clouds? Impossible, if so, to ask, 'Can I be He?' We may claim to call this not error but natural human limitation. Under the shelter of this belief, Jesus could walk with God till He was ready for the stupendous task and unspeakable revelation: 'Thou art my Son!'

But further: How could the young Jesus, if indeed wholly pure from sin, fail to reflect on that radical difference from all others? Here we may adduce another consideration. Christ was no theologian of the Pauline type. His thought does not oscillate between the two poles of sin and grace. Had that been true of Him, the question would have been unescapable. He must very early have detected sin within Himself—or else have stood out conspicuously to His own thought as sinless. There is a grain of truth in the Unitarian view of Jesus as a once-born soul in contrast to the twice-born or 'sick.' While not the only repre-

sentative, He is the highest type of those pure in heart, who, whether here or hereafter, see God. We may believe that the experience of sin, confession, forgiveness passed Him by. It was scriptural and divine, but there was no need for Him to reach God along that path. He who taught the world to call God Father knew *the Father* as soon as He knew anything.

This difficult element in religion, the element of sin, must have pressed more sharply on His notice when He heard of the new prophet with his gospel of repentance and his cleansing rite to enforce it. John and baptism were, He felt sure, from God, yet His attitude may have been not unlike what is imputed to Him at Matthew iii. 15—a clear persuasion of duty, unaccompanied by any personal inward need.[1]

And then the revelation: of sinfulness in all others, of spotless purity in Himself. This moment explains everything. The absence of a sinner's craving to be cleansed is no defect in Him, but the mark of His supreme endowment as the beloved in whom God is well pleased. The religion of Jesus, through long years an unselfconscious thought of God, becomes henceforth two-sided—God as Father, Himself as Son. The discovery of sinlessness is enclosed within a greater and more positive consciousness —that of Sonship. And Sonship is neither metaphysical (as in later theology) nor official (as in Jewish Messianic and half-Jewish Adoptionism). It is personal and moral. Supreme and unique in Jesus, it may yet be shared by all. By a sharp paradox of faith He, consciously man in every fibre, knows Himself the world's Saviour and Judge. How He must act is to be decided under sore temptation. Meantime God has ordered that the sinless one should be linked with sinners in a rite which they plainly need but which for His own sake could mean nothing to Him.

[1] We might also compare the saying imputed to Jesus in the Gospel of the Hebrews.

We have next to speak of the public teaching of Jesus on the doctrine of sin.

The starting point is one of close perhaps [1] verbal contact with the Baptist. Jesus also demands repentance in the light of the great catastrophe which is at hand. He seals as His own whatever John has implied about the inadequacy of the law's observances, about the heathenish pollution of Israel, about the terrors of judgment. Universal sinfulness is the keynote of His first message.

But we have seen already that there are contrasts as well as kinships between John and Jesus, and in Jesus for the first time we find the note of a present forgiveness. It is true that the saying stands on record in only two narratives; it is even true that the proposal has been made [2] to shorten the wonderful narrative of Luke vii. 36-50 by omitting the two theological verses at the close. But we may feel certain that the atmosphere of forgiveness radiated from Jesus like sunshine. The happiness which made it impossible to fast was not confined to the righteous who needed no repentance. It was closely linked with the knowledge of God as Father; yet our one narrative from the Triple Tradition links it closer still with the personal authority of Jesus. At this early date, and before so large a gathering, the title 'Son of Man' may be used exoterically. 'A man on earth *has* the right to forgive'—that was His reply to fault-finding theologians. Only for Himself—or for an initiated disciple-soul ?—would the further meaning emerge: *One* Son of Man can forgive —the destined Lord ! [3]

[1] So St. Matthew.

[2] By J. Weiss. Not in mere caprice, whether convincingly or unconvincingly.

[3] It has been held that Jesus, who healed as well as forgave the man, accommodated Himself to Old Testament ways of thinking, according to which disease is penal and forgiveness must be sealed by recovery. Have we not faith enough in Jesus to accept the connection of this man's paralysis with real sins? Let us remember, too, that Jesus spoke the word of forgiveness (and assuredly was believed !) before He said anything about healing.

Here, then, the teaching of Jesus breaks through eschatological limitations. He speaks now not merely of impending judgment or impending redemption but of a redemption whose blessed ministries are actually at work. This fact is not isolated. Leaders of the eschatological school have dwelt upon the value of Christ's healings to His own faith. Having defeated Satan at the temptation, He was now destroying Satan's evil works in detail (Mark iii. 27 and parallels). The admission is sound; and yet the revelation of forgiveness surely stands higher still. Forgiveness comes first and ranks as best, whatever kind tokens may accompany it. So long as *God in Jesus Christ forgives us*, the heart and soul of Christianity remains intact. *Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and God himself will be their God.*

We said already, in discussing the inner history of Christ's baptism, that our Lord was not a Pauline hamartiologist. This may be verified again from His teaching. He is a hamartiologist. He believes in universal sinfulness, and teaches it explicitly as well as by His call to repentance. 'Ye, *being evil*, know how to give good gifts to your children.' But while St. Paul makes the hamartiological dogma dominant, Christ approaches men, if with the dogma of impending judgment, certainly also with the faith of God's Fatherhood. If Paul speaks to sinners as such, Jesus speaks to man as man. He may seem to subvert much theology when He asks: *Why callest thou me good? None is good but one, that is, God.* Assuredly we have here one supreme proof of Jesus' goodness, in His shrinking from light-minded ascription of it. *He counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God. Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name.* But we must grant too that, for a piety like that which speaks in these words, the very distinction between sin-stained and sinless, between incomplete development and wayward wandering—to say nothing

of the contrast between great sinners and those less guilty—threatens to lose importance. In presence of God's archetypal perfection, what other goodness deserves the name ?

One important phase of our Lord's teaching in regard to sin might be brought into connection with John's cleansing rite. Sin is defilement, and, according to our Lord, the only real defilement.[1] Here a long development comes to its fit conclusion. And here renewed evidence is given us how serious an estimate of sin Jesus formed.

A conception peculiar to our Lord Himself is that of *the evil generation* to which He came. The Old Testament spoke much of national responsibility. Christ holds to this belief; for as Messiah He limits Himself to Israel, though Gentiles were to 'come from the East and West'[2] in order ultimately to enter His kingdom.[3] There is no need to add that Christ was full of mercy for individual sinners, especially those furthest from God and from hope. And yet, apart from happy exceptions, He has a vision of collective destiny and doom for the generation He addresses. Supremely favoured, not alone by His presence but by mighty works that might—nay, would—have brought to repentance Gentile cities whose names were a byword for sin, this generation incurred supreme guilt and corresponding penalty.

One manifestation of evil quality in the men of the age was the demand for a great sign, or, as some passages say, for a sign 'from heaven.' This gives us the clue to the meaning of the demand. They wanted grandiose apoca-

[1] Mark vii; Matt. xv. Probably B. Weiss is right; it *is* a parable of bodily processes which, according to Old Testament law, caused defilement. 'How strange to think that defilement is incurred not by anything coming from without but by what comes from within ourselves.' The *meaning*, of course, is: What comes from the *heart* defiles. Where Paul says 'flesh,' Jesus, like the Rabbis, says 'heart.'

[2] Isa. ii. 2, 3 (= Micah iv. 1, 2)!

[3] Had Jesus definitely commanded *missions* to Gentiles, the matter could hardly have grown into a vexed problem during the apostolic age.

lyptic proofs. We should err greatly if we accepted the radical dogma that Jesus disbelieved in miracles. It was for Him an age in which anything might happen. The line between earth and heaven was disappearing in a glow of light. Wonders were actually being done which filled His mind with thankfulness. Had the people but been worthy ('O *faithless* generation'), what would have been too great for man to ask or for God to bestow?

In Canon E. R. Bernard's interesting article 'Sin'[1] three denunciations of sin by our Lord are noted—an attack on hypocrisy, a doctrine of scandal or the sin of misleading others, and the terrible mystery of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. This last—in contrast with Pauline emphasis on sin as uniform because universal—shows our Lord taking sides with doctrines which conceive of sin as growing from less to more. It is only fair to add that the doctrine has also an eschatological background. The sin denounced is contemptuous rejection of God's *last* and highest gift. There is a horror like Hosea's in Christ's vision of this sin. They did not merely reject one in the garb of man; they knew, and they vexed with rebellion, God's Holy Spirit.

Lastly, we have to ask what we learn regarding Christ's thought of sin from His utterances regarding His death.

Mark, followed by the other Synoptics, tells us that Jesus three several times foretold His passion. No weight is to be put on the figure three. What is meant is that the teaching was deliberate and reiterated. Many radical critics call the whole record *vaticinium post eventum*. That might be plausible if there were no corroboration elsewhere, as in the scornful message to Herod 'the fox': 'It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.' Even more completely beyond the reach of invention is our Lord's impatient sigh when told the disciples 'could

[1] In Dr. Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*.

not' help the epileptic boy (Mark ix. 19). He divined His destiny from the Baptist's fate; from the pattern of Old Testament prophets; from the Scriptures—surely from Isaiah liii most of all. He had read that, all His days; could it fail to teach Him that He must die? He shrank from death—doubtless! The sacrifice would have meant less had it not cost such 'strong crying.' But amid inevitable shrinking and dismay His will was resolutely loyal.

The first of the three Passion announcements has special importance from its connection with Peter's confession. According to Matthew, Jesus passed a eulogium on Peter's God-given wisdom. According to Mark there was no praise but a prohibition: 'Hush! that is not to be spoken of!' It has been reasonably supposed[1] that Jesus read in Peter's glance and heard in His tones political fanaticism, and met it with the chill prophecy of death. Might we further suppose that, in our Lord's own mind, Messiahship and suffering had become completely fused? It might be unbearable to be congratulated on a crown which He knew to be 'of thorns.' For the disciples the mixture of 'welcome and unwelcome things at once' was 'hard to reconcile.' They may have brooded in sullen discontent till the Transfiguration re-established their faith.

A fuller religious interpretation by Jesus of His death is found in two well-known passages. First, the request of James and John (Matt., Mark). We have been asked to write this off as an early Church tradition, affirming merely that Jesus predicted the martyrdom of these two. Surely the martyr death, even if really found in the passage, occurs too incidentally to constitute its main burden. Re-establishment of faith has meant a reawakening of ambition. Christ has to teach two disciples, then ten others, the law of His kingdom—the law of service and sacrifice—reinforced by His own example in life and in death.

[1] So J. Weiss.

In Luke's partial parallel[1] the last great thought is lacking. But when we restore the context of James and John's request,[2] and of Christ's demand that they shall share His cup, the concluding clause is seen to be indispensable. Schweitzer has ingeniously suggested that, when Jesus found the end of the world was delaying, the thought arose that by dying vicariously He might exempt others from death, and introduce the age of glory. Apart from Schweitzer's grotesque belief in Jesus' surprise at the world's continuance, and from the forced Gospel-criticism behind it, we may have something to learn here. Jesus may have conceived of His death as availing with God to bring in immortality. And this may be the inmost truth of our Christian hope and experience, although immortality has not come to Christians according to the form in which the Jewish mind of the first century—possibly even the mind of Jesus during His humiliation—expected it.

Christ speaks of ransoming 'many,' not 'all.' This may be an echo of Isaiah liii. 12.[3] Is there not a further justification? It might have bewildered slow minds to be pledged to a death of loyalty, then to be told in the same breath that Jesus was to die in lieu of them all. It remains a law of God's kingdom that Christians must lay down their own lives for the brethren. Yet surely it was of profound significance that Jesus died between malefactors, no disciple being worthy to share with Him then. It was not for *some* that He tasted death, but for 'every man.'

The record of the observance of the Supper throws us back once again upon Isaiah liii. 12, 'shed for *many*,' perhaps also upon Zechariah ix. 11, '*my* blood of the covenant.' We know that this latter prophecy had been in our Lord's mind in connection with the triumphal entry. Both references would imply a connection between

[1] xxii. 24-27. Conceivably, but not probably, from Q.
[2] Commentators recognise that St. Luke frequently 'spares the apostles.'
[3] So Feine, *New Testament Theology*.

the death of Christ and human salvation. If we are safe in drawing the further inference, that the great New Covenant promise was also in the Master's thoughts, then this solemn teaching definitely connects the death of Christ with human salvation in the special sense of forgiveness—the forgiveness of sins. Indeed Isaiah liii. 10, and again ver. 12, might suffice to guarantee this lesson.

One would hesitate to suppose that the penal view of death was as firmly fixed in the mind of Jesus as in Jewish official theology or (soon after) in the teaching of St. Paul. And yet it is conceivable that Christ so believed. Besides His earlier words we have to study the record of His sufferings. The agony of Gethsemane and the cry of desertion on the cross (Mark and Matthew) might be explained by a shuddering sense that, if He must taste death, He must in doing so receive into His own bosom the wages of human sin. This interpretation can only rank as a possibility; but even as such it is of deep significance to every Christian heart.

In any case we must recall, at the close as at the beginning of this most imperfect study of Christ's relation to sin—in any case we have to take cognisance not only of words but of facts. Not merely what Christ said is of priceless value, but equally what He did, what He endured; when sinlessly, holily, not because of rashness or failure or error, but because of pure unsullied goodness and faithfulness to the Father's will, He was condemned to death by evil men, and God suffered it.

CHAPTER VII

IN THE DISTINCTIVE TEACHING OF ST. PAUL

ST. PAUL has been well described as 'the greatest hamartiologist of the New Testament.' He is indeed at all points the most theologically minded of its writers. For one thing—unlike the Master—he is rabbinically and technically trained. For another thing, his sudden conversion from persecuting zeal to Christian faith forced him to realise and affirm the universality of Christianity. It is interesting to notice how the tradition of Judaism passes on through St. Paul into Christian thought, but also how much of it he turns upside down.

Judaism taught that death was due to sin. This doctrine may possibly have played a part in the experiences of our Lord; we cannot be certain. But with Paul, converted or unconverted, the doctrine is central. Closely allied to it is the other dogma, that crucifixion is a cursed form of death. Saul the persecutor inferred from these doctrines that God Himself had condemned the sham Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth. After he 'saw the Lord,' the doctrines in question proved to him that the sinless Jesus had died for the sin of men, and had borne, on behalf of Jewish Christians, the curse of a broken law. He learned from Judaism that sin is universal, and that salvation comes by obedience to law. During his Jewish period this confidence was gradually undermined by the experience deposited in Romans vii—he could not obey the law, but grew worse and worse under its goading. As

a Christian he continued to proclaim that sin is universal, but he now asserted that the law could not save and that God meant it to provoke sin. Finally, Christian experience proved to Paul—and this also he regarded as universally valid—that it was for the first time possible to do what law requires when one has passed from 'under law' to be under 'grace.' Subsequent theology, as we shall have to note, evaded the brilliant paradoxes of St. Paul's teaching regarding law, but it learned from him more than from any other its doctrines of sin and of atonement.

Let us now turn to the great connected statement of St. Paul's teaching on these subjects. We find it in the Epistle to the Romans.

The general type of a Pauline epistle discusses doctrine in full, then turns to practical admonitions. After Romans, Ephesians exhibits this method most clearly. The Epistle to the Hebrews has a contrasted system; it gives layer upon layer of doctrine with exhortations interposed between. Other New Testament epistles exhibit a less definite structure than either of these types. Now the general character of Romans may be defined by calling it Galatians rewritten. In Galatians the Pauline type is pretty clear, but the doctrinal section is vehemently polemical, and is interwoven with personal apologetics. What he utters there in a storm, blazing with lightning flashes and noisy with peals of thunder, Paul seeks to reproduce very differently for Rome. There are no enemies of his in this unvisited Church; he will forestall enemies, and seek to make sure that the Christians of the world's capital are in sympathy with his deepest beliefs. In Galatians he tells us how, under emergency, he visited the leaders at Jerusalem, and 'laid before them the gospel which he preached to the uncircumcision.' What he did for the Twelve in a private interview he has done for us and for all the world in this short treatise. It is not a com-

plete system of doctrine, but it is something perhaps even more important. It is a careful and highly conciliatory statement, though unwavering in substance, of Paul's 'gospel.' And in particular it deals fully with sin.

The two sections of Galatians are recognisable in Romans (i-xi, xii-xv), but new material is introduced, and the subdivisions are of great importance. Romans vi-viii is new, and in a sense is more analogous to the practical section of Galatians than to anything in its doctrine. Like Galatians v. 13, it opens with a warning against abusing the gospel of free grace. Romans vi. 1 allots the Antinomian inference to an objector; and St. Paul's objectors are never men of straw—they are formidably alive. Reckoning subdivisions, one might distinguish (1) the universality of sin; (2) justification by grace, iii. 21-v. 21; [(2*a*) digression, chapter iv; Abraham's prerogatives stand]; (3) 'mystical' life-fellowship with Christ and redemption from bondage to the flesh, vi-viii; (4) the problem of Israel—raising incidentally the problem of Election—ix-xi; (5) practical teaching, xii-xv. Something must be said here regarding the first, second, and third of these sections.

St. Paul begins with a demonstration of the universality of sin. He might have taken a short-cut to his conclusion by appealing to the universality of death, for he believes that death implies sin; but, though he makes that statement incidentally (v. 12), he prefers a different train of thought for his main argument. It will also be contended by some that he explains the universality of sin as well as of death by the act of Adam. In any case, Adam appears at the end of the argument, not at the beginning. Let the critics of the great theological apostle put it to his credit that he opens his campaign by appealing to facts.

Yet it was no easy task he set himself—to prove a universal (and such a universal!) by an induction of particulars. He simplifies the task by operating with a

time-honoured distinction—Greeks and Jews. The Gentiles are charged with idolatry as their master-sin. In spite of a clear revelation in physical nature (to which ii. 14, 15 adds, In conscience), mankind has practised the ignoble, blasphemous cult of images. When he refers to the unnatural vices that flourished unchecked under classical civilisation, he does not emphasise their character as sins, though he abhors them infinitely. Modern minds, rightly or wrongly, see in vice a clearer proof of the degradation caused by sin than in idolatry itself. For St. Paul the vices of that wise world which knew not God are the first terrible instalment of divine punishment.

Turning in chapter ii to the Jews, he seems to find more difficulty in framing a conclusive indictment. The first argument merely declares that it will not do to blame others if in conduct we are equally guilty ourselves. The insinuation that Jewish life was largely degraded may have been warranted; but it is difficult to base a universal dogma upon rhetorical phrases. In the end, St. Paul appeals to denunciations of sin in the Psalter. He declares that that book belongs to 'the law,' and that 'the law' addresses those 'under' it. Accordingly, the Jews are meant; and so the 'whole world' is 'guilty before God.' His quotation in Galatians (iii. 10; Deut. xxvii. 26) seems a better logical proof of the guilt of Israel, though even this citation interprets Old Testament words with a stringency undreamed of by the original human authors.

Sin is thus shown to be universal. And with St. Paul universal sin is taken in a very strong sense. He does not merely hold that there is a regrettable taint of evil in every man; he sees the world ripe for final judgment. The characteristic phrase is, 'there is no distinction' (iii. 22); we meet it again in the major mode at x. 12. Paul does not entangle himself in the paradox that all sins are equally bad. But he sees no use in arguing whether our debt amounts to fifty or to five hundred pence, if we have

'nothing to pay.' The whole set of his thought disinclines him to draw contrasts between different degrees of the universal guilt.

Another thing we must note is the occurrence of certain moral and religious postulates in the course of the argument. As Jew and as Christian, Paul feels that nothing can challenge God's function as judge (iii. 6). As Christian he adds to this that there must be no boasting in God's presence (iii. 27; iv. 2). Nothing can be true which represents God as man's debtor.

When he passes on to speak of justification Paul names as its means the blood of Christ; and there can be little doubt this is sacrificial language. Probably the doctrine was pre-Pauline. It was demanded by the facts and enforced by Isaiah liii; it had in all probability been taught by the Master Himself and repeated by the Jewish apostles (1 Cor. xv. 3, 11). Why sacrificial blood possesses atoning quality Paul does not tell us. Nor does he face questions investigated in the Epistle to the Hebrews—what it was that the literal sacrifices of the Old Testament attained, and wherein they fell short. It may be true, as Holtzmann and others hold, that Paul interpreted a sin-offering as a vicarious punishment. That cannot have been the primitive view, but it may have been a dogma or pious opinion of Jewish theology. On other lines we see St. Paul's thought formulating a doctrine of penal substitution; on this line—when sacrifice is in view—evidence is lacking. Sacrifice was not a dominant conception with the apostle. The law said to him, Do this and live; not, Enjoy divine fellowship; not, Rectify wrong relations with God. Though he probably implies that Old Testament sacrifices were types of Christ's death, he does not consciously connect law with that supremely great event. The new righteousness of God in Christ is 'apart from law' (iii. 21).

It is true that in the Atonement he sees God 'just, and the justifier of' the believer (iii. 26). This may be held to guarantee a penal view of sacrifice. But surely a narrowly orthodox paraphrase of St. Paul's phrase—say, 'just *although* the justifier'—fails to include everything. St. Paul holds that the condemning justice of God must be dealt with in Christ. Yet that, even for St. Paul, is a mere *conditio sine qua non* of human salvation. It is morally necessary that God be just in the matter of punishment; but also it is morally necessary, if God is to be true to Himself, that He become at length a justifier. Condemnation though terrible is divine and glorious, but the ministry of reconciliation is more divine and more glorious by far (2 Cor. iii. 9). The sinner is an enemy; God regards him as such (Rom. v. 10); but it is the glory of the gospel that the Son of God died for God's enemies (v. 8).

Here we strike upon the extraordinarily difficult parallel between Adam and Christ. While the dependence of the race upon Adam is good Jewish theology, it is quite possible that Christian motives stiffen the doctrine when Paul treats Adam and Christ in parallelism. Death is said to have passed upon all, 'for that all sinned.' The old rendering, 'in whom all sinned,' was, of course, grammatically vicious; it is not certain that it distorted the sense. There are at least four possible views.

Most logical of all: (1) Death passed on all, for all had sinned [in Adam], which we may see from the fact that, in the ages before the law, when mankind[1] were not personally responsible beings, death reigned unchecked. It was the penalty of Adam's fault: 'Immediate imputation.'

Or: (2) Death passed upon all, for all proved hereditarily sinners. And, if you say that sin was not fully imputable in the period before the law, I grant it; but I point out to you that sin was even then sufficiently virulent to cause universal death. This is 'mediate imputation.'

[1] The fathers of the Jewish race?

Adam infected mankind with sin, and sin involved the death penalty—directly from men's own act, indirectly from Adam's.

Or: (3) Sin showed itself in the world for the first time under Adam, and death soon appeared as its result; and so death became universal, for all in their turn showed the inevitable bias of the flesh towards sin. Yet a peculiar significance attaches to the first manifestation of a tendency; and Adam's sin is the legal ground of death during the ages before the law.

Or: (4) Death passed from Adam's act upon all men. And if this seems unsatisfactory, remember—they were all individually sinners.

Dr. Agar Beet has argued that a Bible writer must be interpreted on the assumption that he is self-consistent. The maxim is a good one, if it will work; it must not cover a revived dogmatic postulate: 'The thinking of inspired men exhibits no gaps and no fallacies.' Of the above four interpretations, as we have already said, the first alone is fully logical. The fourth is indeed defended by Feine with the remark that St. Paul defies his own logic; he ought to make the parallel of Adam and Christ exact, but to meet moral difficulties he falls back on the assertion that each man destroys himself, though he never could teach self-salvation. Did the apostle's heart then fail him at the last moment? It is possible but hardly probable. The chief drawback to interpretation (1) is that Paul could have put that position far more clearly. Number (2) seems to do violence to language. Number (3) has high authority in its favour,[1] but it is hard to believe that such a platitude[2] is all that is covered by the apostle's words.

[1] My colleague during many years, Professor Peake, is a lifelong student of Paulinism. The importance of his published work on the subject must not be judged by its externals. Even his incidental references have behind them exhaustive knowledge and vigorous thought.

[2] Or is it to be taken as a *quasi* survival of primitive belief in magic?

In offering an opinion one does so with all reserve. It seems to the present writer, after such study as he has been able to give to the matter,[1] that we are compelled to find 'immediate imputation' in the passage. Only, unlike the Protestant scholastics, we must not include 'mediate imputation' as being also part of Paul's teaching. So far as I am now able to judge, St. Paul does not reflect on the connection between Adam's act and the sinfulness of empirical human nature. 'Adam' appears only in the section of Romans devoted to the problem of guilt and justification. 'The flesh' (in the technical sense) appears only in the section dealing with bondage and mystical redemption. It does not seem necessary—even as a matter of logic, for the sake of the argument—to make St. Paul hold Adam responsible for more than physical death. Inbred sinfulness need not be dragged in at this point. Still less need we connect with Adam the final damnation of the unconverted or non-elect. Logic may tend towards such corollaries; but it is presumptuous to claim the apostle's vote and influence for extreme deductions hammered out of his words by ages of scholastic controversy.

If this is correct, there are two concurrent sources of obscurity in the passage we are studying. Partly the passage is obscure because St. Paul has failed to think out his system in all possible ramifications. His own mind has probably left in the dark the connection between Adam and the flesh. Partly too, even when he means to be quite definite, St. Paul has failed to convey his meaning clearly to our minds; or, to use more decorous terms, his readers and students have failed to grasp his point.[2] Grammarians may ultimately authorise one interpreta-

[1] Modifying what he wrote in noticing Feine's *New Testament Theology*, ed. 1, for the *Review of Theology and Philosophy*.

[2] I do not find it necessary to exclude interpretation (4); but the main line of thought seems to be given by interpretation (1)—modified as in the text.

tion and forbid the rest. Hitherto, at least, they have not been able to close the discussion. One feels as if St. Paul, instead of stating his views in full, had thrown at us shorthand notes in a foreign language which we know very imperfectly. What can the Roman church have made of the passage?

Much of what has to be said regarding chapters vi-viii has already been forestalled. The discussion is new in Romans as compared with Galatians. This (as it is often called) 'mystical' deliverance from bondage comes by 'baptism into Christ's death.' Being rescued in principle by the twofold miracle of the crucifixion (accompanied by the resurrection) and of baptism, Christians are to make good in life what is theirs by faith. In chapter vii the evil principle begins to be called 'the flesh,' and St. Paul records his own history, with possible allegorising of Genesis iii. Amid the noble organ-music of Romans viii we have particularly definite dogmas regarding bondage in sin (7, 8). In other contexts these words might be understood with literary freedom, or taken as historical generalisations. But, standing in a great dogmatic treatise, they mean all that they say.

We must go back to the closing passage of Galatians—the ethical section—to learn what St. Paul means by 'flesh.' His psychology of the moral life is loyal to the facts of conflict and choice; it hardly allows the existence of anything else. The flesh is wholly bad. The spirit—when describing unregenerate man in Romans vii, Paul rather says 'the inner man'—is purely good. Unlike later orthodoxy, Paul sees in the unsaved a longing for what is good; only this longing is hopeless. He points us to experience—as in dealing with sin's universality, so here in describing sin's bondage. His own intense emotional nature, and his own sensitive conscience, resulted in experiences which he regards as inevitable for all mankind. He never drops

a hint that he is being guided by Greek philosophy. Even if he is, he does not appeal to its authority but to what he regards as the authority of facts.

Quite as important as the technical question, where St. Paul got his name for 'the flesh,' is the substantial issue: Did he consider man's nature as formed by God[1] fatally destined to sin? No room may seem to be left for holding anything else, if we are right in saying that St. Paul has not worked out a theory of the inheritance of corruption from Adam. Or is it possible that he failed to theorise at all upon the origins of sinfulness? The Jewish doctrine of the *Yetzer* is at its best highly ambiguous. Perhaps here again there is a backward influence from Christian doctrine. As Paul's view of man's dependence on Adam may be sharpened by a comparison with dependence on Christ, so his account of man in the flesh may be darkened by a contrast to his view of man in the spirit. At any rate we must avoid the error of holding that the flesh according to St. Paul is weak. That is good Old Testament doctrine, but not Pauline. For Paulinism the flesh is fatally strong, so strong as to neutralise the powers of the law of God.

Little has yet been said here about the characteristic Pauline doctrine of law—a doctrine so startling that systematic theologians with one consent have set it aside. If in Galatians the law is largely ceremonial, given as Paul would say *only* by angels and not directly by God,[2] in Romans attention is concentrated on its higher side. It is 'the law of God' embodying essential moral claims. It fails on one side because of the flesh, but on another side because God did not mean it to succeed. The promise to Abraham looked right on to the Gospel; the law came in

[1] Moderns would add, through evolution.

[2] The emphasis in Stephen's speech (at any rate) is different (Acts vii. 53); compare also Hebrews ii. 2.

between to provoke sin and show it in its full malignity. The element of law taken by itself (and it is regarded alike by Paul and by the Pharisees as the essential feature of the Old Covenant) cannot be a full or worthy revelation of God—that surely is permanent Christian truth.

There are other difficulties still in St. Paul's doctrine of law. What does he hold about its relation to the imputation of sin? How can we harmonise the following sayings or groups of sayings:—(1) Those who sin without law perish without law. (2) Where there is no law neither is there transgression. (3) Sin is not imputed when there is no law. (4) The law entered that the offence might abound. (5) Sin became exceeding sinful?[1] Formally, one takes it, they cannot be harmonised. Sin can ruin apart from law; law first creates responsibility; law aggravates guilt. These are three views, not one. Yet all three views agree in implying that *law does no good*; and again all imply that *only the gospel saves*. The passage in Romans ii from which our first quotation is taken seems to be a fragment of a moral system which has wandered into a dogmatic context. Calvinism used to pretend that the heathen had light enough to condemn but not to save; to which one's conscience replied that the only ground why light condemns is that, if better employed, it might save. The truth is that at Romans ii. 12 the great dogmatic apostle falls back upon a moral view of human life which brings him nearer to teachings of the Master and to other New Testament epistles. It will not do to evade such passages by saying with A. Ritschl that in Romans ii Paul is arguing upon Pharisee principles which he does not personally hold. Indeed he does hold them, and as a loyal disciple he must. Whether he can reconcile justification by faith with judgment by works—or whether in face of that problem he is no wiser than the rest of us—he is bound to teach both.

[1] Rom. ii. 12; iv. 15; v. 13; v. 20; vii. 13.

As often as he begins to talk morality he recurs to the truth that what we sow we reap (Gal. vi. 7 ; 1 Cor. vi. 9). His very doctrine of law, as we notice, has touches of the same moral wisdom about it. Not even to this great champion of gospel truth has it been granted to create one rounded and harmonious system of doctrine. Even in such close-knit dialectic we must distinguish letter from spirit, eternal principle from inadequate time-forms. The Church has failed to improve much of its splendid Pauline inheritance. Yet Catholicism did not do amiss when it concentrated on the central truth of atonement, and left over the exploration of the Pauline outfield for happier ages.

CHAPTER VIII

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT GENERALLY

WHILE the singular powers of St. Paul have given him great though not unlimited influence over later theology, there exists in other passages of the New Testament a different type of doctrine regarding sin. In noting this divergence one does not affirm contradiction. The two hamartiologies are fitted to complement each other—not as parts of one system of doctrine, which they are not, but as separate aspects of a single truth. To make such an affirmation, however, is to pass into dogmatics. Speaking as historians, we have to begin by establishing the existence of the second type.

Before we try to do this it may be well to note briefly the general New Testament acceptance of the doctrine of Christ's atonement for sin. The agreement is not quite unbroken. No mention is made of any such truth in the Epistle of James. This is significant enough, and a warning against hard or dictatorial dogmatism. Yet we may surely consider it still more significant that only one[1] writing of the New Testament is thus silent. Particular importance attaches to St. Paul's summary of central truths at 1 Corinthians xv. 3-11—truths taught in the Christian Church before him. Very likely St. Paul's experience and his dialectic sharpened the outlines of the common creed. Very likely his statements in its support have fringes of

[1] It would not be fair to draw inferences from such short writings as Jude or 2 and 3 John.

idiosyncrasy which the Church as a whole will never be able to appropriate. But the central testimony remains, and it is indeed memorable. 'Whether it be I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.'

Turning now to the general New Testament doctrine of sin, we remark the absence of the Pauline formula which asserts that 'there is no distinction.' Degrees and stages in evil, however undeniable in point of fact, were negligible for St. Paul's doctrine in the presence of universal guilt, ruin, helplessness. For the other type of doctrine, degrees and stages in evil are all-important. Its starting point is found in Christ's words regarding an unpardonable blasphemy.[1] These terrible words have elements of mercifulness, both in regard to the degrees of sin which may be forgiven, and to the age-long possibility of seeking and finding forgiveness. When a similar distinction of grades in evil reappears in apostolic writings, the central idea is that ignorance may be a partial apology, while no complete exculpation, for wrong-doing.

The keynote here is furnished by words of our Lord upon the cross as reported in Luke (xxiii. 34). Even if we accepted the unpleasant interpretation which confines the reference of the words to Gentile underlings, and excludes the true authors of the great crime, the plea would still imply that partial ignorance mitigates guilt. We find a similar doctrine at Acts iii. 17—words which may further serve as evidence in what sense our Lord's words were understood by St. Luke.[2] Here the plea explicitly covers the very conspirators within the Sanhedrin. Their sin was not the greatest possible, and is therefore nearer the hope of pardon. Another unmistakable example of the doctrine occurs at 1 Timothy i. 13, where the aged St. Paul is represented as declaring that

[1] See above, Chapter VI. p. 72.

[2] Compare also Acts vii. 60. Could we suppose that Stephen died in a more merciful mood than his Lord?

he had obtained mercy, though a persecutor, because he had acted 'ignorantly, in unbelief.' This echo of the non-Pauline type of doctrine concurs with much other internal evidence in leading us to place 1 Timothy—and probably also the companion epistles—later than St. Paul. The verse which declares that he had been 'the chief of sinners' might sound more Pauline, yet it gives stronger expression to a sense of purely personal guilt than we find in the better authenticated epistles.

There remain one or two doubtful passages. Acts xvii. 23 (30), whether the composition of St. Paul or of St. Luke, gives a different turn to the conception of ignorance. An altar to an unknown God is the non-Christian world's confession of helplessness! The next words, which contain a real parallel to Romans i. 20—and still more to Acts xiv. 15-17—imply that Gentile mankind might have known God from His works; there is, or there ought to be, a Natural Theology. And yet not by these means have the times of ignorance[1] come to an end, but by the mission of the Man whom God has raised from the dead and through whom He will judge the world. Previous ignorance, whether or not less guilty, had been treated with less rigour.[2] Now the standard rises. We can hardly say with confidence that the passage speaks to our problem. If it does, and if it be genuinely St. Paul's, the reason might be that unwonted circumstances had led his mind into an unusual train of thought.

1 Peter i. 14 might also be taken as conveying an implication that ignorance lessens guilt. And, if so, we might argue that the passage is an example of independence towards St. Paul's type of thinking, in an epistle which contains many Pauline echoes. But here again there is no certainty. The fact of ignorance is emphasised, but not its theological or religious significance.

[1] A phrase which suggests a corresponding Mohammedan conception.
[2] Here again compare Romans iii. 25.

Another view of ignorance regards it as an aggravation of guilt and not an exculpation. Involuntary ignorance would exculpate, but what if ignorance is, at least in part, self-incurred? That is affirmed regarding Gentile mankind in Romans i—the dogmatic high-water mark of St. Paul and of the New Testament. Gentiles had all the materials for constructing a Natural Theology, and *they did not like to retain God in their thoughts*. At Acts xiii. 27 St. Paul is reported as passing the same censure on the Jews of Jerusalem. At any rate he drops no hint—like that of St. Peter in Acts iii—that their ignorance lessened their guilt. And surely ignorance of their own Scriptures must have been incurred by their own fault, and would therefore aggravate their offence. If this interpretation be just, then the discourse of Acts xiii, which has been called Petrine or by others Catholicising, is not without characteristic Pauline touches.

At Ephesians iv. 18 the doctrine of guilty ignorance reappears more plainly still. At 1 Corinthians ii. 8 we break fresh ground. Here St. Paul hints at an esoteric doctrine, regarding angel-rulers who did not know what they were doing when they crucified Christ. In its context, this again seems guilty ignorance. These blinded but murderous angels are true kinsmen of the outwitted Satan who figures in patristic doctrines of the atonement. Yet parallels in other Pauline epistles [1] suggest that (at least in certain moods) St. Paul conceived of angels who were neutral rather than hostile to God, and who came to partake in the blessings of Christ's reconciliation. On the whole this half-divulged esoteric lore appears to be little fitted for embodying in doctrines, and less valuable than the grand gospel commonplaces. The most purely neutral of all St. Paul's references to human ignorance of God is found at Galatians iv. 8, 9.[2] It had

[1] Eph. i. 10; Col. i. 20.
[2] Characteristic Pauline language; compare 1 Corinthians viii. 3.

existed; but, whether due to guilt or to misfortune, it is gone!

The central Pauline doctrine reappears twice in the discourses of the Fourth Gospel (viii. 55; xvi. 3). Upon any view of that Gospel we must make room for infiltrations and even remodellings in the record of Christ's teaching.

This Pauline mode of thought has antecedents in the Old Testament. The prayer of Jeremiah x. 25 (= Psalm lxxix. 6, 7) is only saved from heartlessness if we suppose that the ignorance spoken of was a fruit of sin. And, in fact, words that immediately follow speak of cruel wrong-doing on the part of the Gentile nations. Correlative to this doctrine of guilty ignorance is the doctrine of a knowledge of God involving moral conditions (Jer. xxii. 15, 16). All this leads on well enough to St. Paul's more sharply formulated doctrines.

Returning to the view that ignorance is a palliation, we have next to ask: Is such palliation necessary to forgiveness? Are sins of ignorance the only sins God will pardon? That is the plain and emphatic teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews (iv. 15; v. 2; vi. 4; ix. 7; x. 26). In this fuller unfolding of theological implications the epistle is but loyal to the letter and spirit of the Old Testament law.[1] Such a verse as Psalm xix. 12 may reveal something of the timidity of a soul environed by countless ritual dangers, but is mainly the outbreathing of a tender conscience. The 'great' transgression dreaded as not unthinkable (ver. 13) is no doubt apostasy to the heathen party.

This brings us back to the 'wilful sin' of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Professor K. Lake[2] has suggested that for this epistle all post-baptismal sin ranks as mortal, whereas for 1 John (v. 16, 17) there exist the two classes of mortal

[1] *Supra*, Chapter III. p. 42.
[2] *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, art. 'Baptism.'

and venial sins. That is surely wrong. The writer of Hebrews is steadily contemplating the one sin of apostasy, which he identifies with the unpardonable sin of the Master's teaching.[1] With all the energy at his command he assures his readers that, if they once deliberately fall away, they are eternally lost. But he has not told us that no 'post-baptismal' sin finds pardon. Surely it is incredible that one who dwells so lovingly upon the gentleness of Old Testament high priests should present to our faith a great High Priest in heaven who is merciless towards the least lapse.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews it may cost some reading between the lines to discover teaching about the pardon of sins committed by Christians. Other parts of the New Testament speak with greater clearness upon the subject. First of all, we may point out that the Lord's Prayer is framed for those habitually in need of forgiveness, and habitually receiving it from God's mercy. Unless we share the bizarre spirituality of the Plymouth Brethren, and seek to rise beyond that prayer into a supposed region of higher dogmatic and apostolic truth, the question is decided for us by this one appeal.

But secondly, we may appeal to St. Paul. In the rage for new interpretations, good or bad, some have told us that Paul dogmatically teaches the sinlessness of every believer. It is true that his outlook leads him to emphasise, in bold black and white, the contrast between the state of sin and that of grace. But he is nowhere guilty of the suggested exaggeration. Some Corinthian Christians have actually died, he says, because of sins (1 Cor. xi. 30), though this premature removal was a fatherly chastening

[1] No act of sin can tend straighter towards eternal ruin than deliberate turning away from the Saviour; yet we may trust that the solemn words of Christ, backed by the experience of centuries, give hope even here. The needful warning of the epistle has hardened into an over-definite assertion. Has not the epistle itself spoken elsewhere of One 'able to save to the uttermost'?

and not penal (ver. 32). He demands that the same church (v. 3-5) shall vote in confirmation of his own apostolic decree, handing over to Satan the hero of a scandalous marriage; again, with the purpose of securing ultimate salvation. A similar situation is implied at 1 Timothy i. 20. Again, grave wrong having been done to St. Paul,[1] but repentance having at length supervened, Paul has to plead that the whole Church will join with him in forgiving the offender (2 Cor. ii. 7-11). The clearest passage of all is Galatians vi. 1, 2. In the ethical section at the close of that epistle St. Paul enumerates different safeguards against sin. But, 'if' an open fault occurs, the 'spiritual' members of the Church, whose communion with God is unbroken, must humbly restore the erring one. Thus Christians may 'bear one another's burdens.'

A similar demand for Christian mediation on behalf of wrong-doers is found in an epistle of a very different cast. St. James (v. 16) requires his readers to confess faults mutually, and pray for one another in order that they may be 'healed.' The closing verses (19, 20) speak of an 'erring' brother who, if not guilty of mortal sin, has been drifting perilously near destruction, but may be rescued. They do not suggest the Pauline view that death itself might be remedial.

Lastly, under this head, we have peculiarly full teaching in 1 John. This epistle might seem, more than anything in St. Paul, to assert the essential sinlessness of the Christian (iii. 6, 9; v. 18), but we must judge every author's meaning by his explicit statements on the point at issue. (1) First of all, there is the dreadful presence of sin in human life before it is mastered by Christ (i. 10). (2) Even afterwards there is need of confession and forgiveness (ver. 9). Although the need in this happier period is stated in less emphatic tones (ver. 8), still only self-deception,

[1] For we must not take the old view which discovered here the incestuous person of 1 Corinthians v.

threatening loss of 'the truth,' can suppose that the need is non-existent. (3) We are to cease from sin; but, 'if' we fall, Jesus intercedes—Jesus the propitiation (ii. 1, 2). (4) In the case of certain open but not fatal wrong-doings, the individual Christian, the 'spiritual' one of Galatians vi. 1, is to intercede and obtain mercy for his fallen brother (1 John v. 16). (5) Sins 'unto death'[1] are excluded. There is no encouragement—if also no direct prohibition—to intercede for such cases of moral disaster.

We must thus recognise as general apostolic teaching the doctrine of the intercession with God (James, 1 John) of the spiritual members of the church, or their direct action on the wrong-doer (Gal., James). We do not read that the church as a church should undertake this duty; yet St. Paul counts it possible that a church ought to doom a member to supernatural though remedial penalties (1 Cor.). There is here a parallel to the priestly ideas of later ages, along with a striking contrast. There may have been sacramental ideas in the minds of the apostles or apostolic men whose words we are studying; sacerdotal belief, in a close corporation of authorised mediators, had no existence. If pristine purity could have lasted, we might have seen through the centuries brother confessors, brother intercessors, brother mediators with God, bearing one another's burdens and fulfilling the law of Christ. It ought never to have been possible for a sacerdotal caste to tyrannise over Christ's flock.[2]

Another feature in primitive Christian piety contrasts not only with later sacerdotalism but with later evangelicalism. From Augustine downwards the temper of Christian evangelicalism is, as Harnack expresses it, 'sorrow' but 'sorrow comforted.' The sinner, even when regenerate and midway in the process which theology calls sanctifi-

[1] Apostasy? Or murder and adultery as well? Or, is it sin followed sharply by physical death?

[2] Early Buddhism had a similar spirit, which has given place not (outside of Tibet) to hierarchicalism but to formality and deadness.

cation, is one who 'daily breaks the commandments of God in thought, word, and deed.'[1] Not so the New Testament. Even according to St. Paul, doing right ranks as normal. The requirement of the law 'is fulfilled.'

We need say nothing further about minor offences in the Christian life. Is it possible for maximum offence to be committed? Is a Christian secure for all the future,[2] or can he forfeit grace? The universal or all but universal answer of the New Testament is that he is in a state of real danger. That is the vehement and awestruck burden of the Epistle to the Hebrews. So also Jude; so also 2 Peter; so also St. Paul himself, whether in Romans xi. (22) or in 1 Corinthians (ix. 27; x. 4). In favour of a more Calvinistic interpretation of the apostle's meaning we may be reminded of his inclination to regard even death incurred by fault as a remedial chastening.[3] But the inference suggested is not valid. Paul teaches that the characteristic and typical working of punishment, as experienced by Christians, is reclamation; and again, the characteristic and typical development of a Christian's heart is perseverance till the end. But St. Paul is not found mechanically excluding other and darker possibilities. He refers to these, in passages already cited, by no means in the tone of one contemplating mere theoretic possibilities. 'The man,' wrote George Bowen of Bombay,[4] 'that discards the word "If" from his theology has no longer a Bible.' This great Bible writer retains the word 'If,' in all its sombre meaning. And if we shrink from[5] what seems to us

[1] Westminster Assembly's *Shorter Catechism*.
[2] Compare the doctrine of Buddhism, and again of Stoicism.
[3] With the passages given on p. 94, note also 2 Corinthians x. 8; xiii. 10.
[4] *Daily Meditations*, p. 214.
[5] The document in regard to which one might feel doubt is the Fourth Gospel. 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out' has been plausibly enough interpreted to mean, Once received never again rejected. Also there is strong emphasis in the words 'hath passed from death unto life'—words which impressed John M'Leod Campbell so greatly when he was extending a tentative half-recognition to Erskine's Universalism (vi. 37, v. 24).

a dangerous tendency in some types of modern evangelicalism to view human souls as in Christ and out of Christ alternately, over and over again—may one suggest that the subject is one not fitted for dogmatic formulation?

A further question arises: If grace is once lost, can it ever be restored? As we all know, this was hotly debated in the early Church, and a series of rigorist 'heresies' sought to maintain the severer view. Or nearly so: they admitted the possibility that God might be gracious; but His church on earth dared not restore the blasphemer, the adulterer, the murderer. The great Church more and more boldly took the opposite view. Catholic and Protestant orthodoxies both concur. The churches forgive all manner of guilt; much more will Christ, for whom the church speaks, receive the penitent to full mercy even to the uttermost. In this case the letter of the New Testament—in the Epistle to the Hebrews—is on the side of the rigorists; just as the letter of the New Testament—in the Epistle of James—favours the denial of salvation by faith 'alone.' 1 John also, if it raises rather than settles the question, inclines upon the whole towards severity. On the other hand, the logic of St. Paul's thinking is likely to incline him to mercy. If there is 'no distinction' in sin, any movement of genuine penitence may surely win acceptance. When a Christian delivered 'to Satan' is still to be saved, what case can be hopeless?

The great church passages (Matt. xvi. 18, 19; xviii. 17; John xx. 22) suggest to us that the doctrine of a mediatorial church is beginning to affect even the record of Christ's words. Comparative criticism of the Synoptics, and the pressure of the Roman controversy, have led many to-day to question the reliableness of the Single Tradition in Matthew xvi. Not improbably the Johannine parallel —which places all the apostles where Matthew places Simon Peter alone—also betrays the colouring of a later generation. No distinction is drawn in these passages between

pre-baptismal and post-baptismal sin. All sins seem to be covered by the language. Nor could a modern Christian, however intense his biblical orthodoxy, revive the doctrine of a pure Church where one lapse was to involve permanent excommunication. Still less could he dare to hold that any sin was beyond the mercy of God.

CHAPTER IX

THE DOGMATIC CLIMAX

In Church theology we find an emphasis and an elaboration which even St. Paul, most theological of Bible writers, fails to exhibit. The statement very manifestly holds good of the doctrine of sin. In order to justify the increasing stringency of definition, it is sometimes pleaded that the new conclusions emerge by 'good and necessary consequence' from the old biblical data. How often has Calvinism, in more dogmatic generations, insisted on the assertion that disputing its conclusions means logical incoherence! We must test this claim in a rapid—and, of course, extremely incomplete—historical review. Does Calvinism itself preserve all that is logically suggested? And does it omit everything that is logically discredited? Any real quarrel with logic would be indeed a betrayal of truth; but the hints and half-lights of the New Testament are not used for the edification of the Church when they are treated as a lawyer treats his documents. Not by such mechanical methods can we do honour to revelation.

The Greek Church is not pre-eminently interested in the doctrine of sin. When it thinks of redemption, it is more concerned with physical immortality than with forgiveness. If it turns to the inner life of the soul, it desires to champion freewill against naturalism rather than to weigh the facts of guilt. Still, one important step was taken when the Pauline paradoxes about law were dropped,

and when the insight of St. Paul's genius was simultaneously forfeited. Henceforward the official theology of all the churches interprets the relation of God to man in terms of law, the West building higher and ever higher on foundations laid in the East.

Yet this could not be the whole state of the case. The Greek Church possessed in its own language the originals of the Pauline epistles. It also possessed the early chapters of Genesis, and placed their authority very high, though a tendency to allegorise prevented the ruthless dogmatic use made of these chapters in the Christian West. In Dr. Tennant's judgment Origen, the most original mind of the Christian East, based a doctrine of natal impurity upon Psalm li and upon the growing practice of infant baptism. Again, in commenting on Romans v, Origen approaches somewhat near to St. Paul's genuine theology. But his chief contribution to hamartiology is the assertion of a fall of souls during a state of pre-existence. This speculation safeguards freewill and responsibility while fully recognising the fact of guilt. On the other hand, it ignores the unity of mankind. It shows us probation proceeding on innumerable parallel lines, but knows nothing of one danger and one victory. The ingenious audacity gained few supporters, and was finally branded as heresy.

Again, Dr. Tennant's analysis reports that a Western (though Greek-writing) pioneer, Irenæus, travelled along lines of his own to a doctrine of the Fall and of original sin, his use of Romans v being of the nature of an afterthought. More striking if not more important than Irenæus is the vehement and ill-balanced genius of Tertullian, with its intense legalist morality. While characteristically denouncing philosophy, Tertullian is largely influenced by his training in Stoicism. He is Stoical in teaching the materiality of God and of the human soul, and the traducianist propagation of the latter along with the body. Naturally, therefore, he teaches that sin too is

inherited,[1] not prenatally acquired by individual guilt. But he is no systematic thinker. While others, before and after him, connect the doctrine of original sin with infant baptism, Tertullian regards the latter as an imprudent squandering of life's one great chance of forgiveness. Very few distinguished names accept traducianism. Even Augustine declines to dogmatise on the matter. Have we not here one doctrine in which caution has ruled rather than remorseless logic? Creationism has held the field, defying hamartiological probabilities. Are we to teach original sin, yet believe that each soul is created independently by a God who loves purity? And are we to explain that each soul as it enters the body is stained with the indelible dye of sin, not by physical contact but by God's strange choice? A theology which walks right up to the traducianist dogma and then shrinks back is but little entitled to brag of its logical pre-eminence.

Omitting for brevity even so distinguished a name as Ambrose, we pass to the yet greater name of Augustine. Whatever advance had been made towards the hamartiology of the West by earlier Latin fathers, infinitely more was due to this great genius and true saint. From his mind and heart—under God, and in subordination among human masters only to St. Paul—issue the evangelical doctrines of sin and salvation which fertilise later ages. From him also emerge the moral perplexities connected with these doctrines, to torment the human conscience.

Even independently of controversy with Pelagius, Augustine represents the first of the great Pauline reactions of Church History. Whatever in the Catholic theology has grown out of Paulinism, great tracts of Pauline thought have been a sealed book to the Catholic mind whether in East or West. The book is opened, and its contents work with explosive power, in Augustinianism, in the Pro-

[1] It seems to be incorrect to say that Tertullian speaks of *peccatum originale* (Hagenbach). His phrase is *vitium originis*.

testant Reformation, in the Evangelical Revival. A second master mind, like St. Paul's though with many differences, passes through a deep religious crisis, and in finding salvation finds also a gospel for the world. This is Augustine's greatest glory—not that he was a genius, but that he came by terrible ways to know God and the reality of salvation. In defeating Pelagius he set the West at variance with what the East had been prepared to welcome as excellent freewill doctrine (though unbalanced by mystical theories of redemption). He may seem to be recoiling a great way towards his earlier Manichæism; but Augustine is delivering his deepest Christian convictions.

Wrapped round this gospel, more closely even than round St. Paul's, is a great theological system. We may trace several motives concurring to shape Augustine's doctrine of sin and salvation. First, there is the hamartiological motive proper, given in a dread personal experience of helpless guilt. Secondly, there is experience of the healing touch of divine grace, when the soul says, *Not I but God*. Perhaps Augustine never learned to say with equal significance, *Not I but Christ*. Far back, behind doctrines and ordinances, stood Christ and His work. Immediacy of access to Him was denied. Happily, there was still a sense of immediate access to God. And in this Augustine possessed the central truth of evangelicalism. A man does not save himself; God saves him. But in Augustine this truth is linked with predestinarian teachings. The hamartiological doctrine—*sinful man is helpless*—passes into the religious thought of a *God who does all things*. And that in turn, thirdly, takes on speculative elements. Augustine's 'theology proper' is not always directly religious. If one reads even the short treatise which, according to Harnack, so well reveals Augustine the Catholic—if one reads the *Enchiridion*—one is struck with the favourite quotation: 'Our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever it hath pleased him.' A philo-

sophical faith in the supreme will blends with Christian faith in the supreme grace. We moderns have to distinguish the two. Fourthly, there is the sacramental motive. Notably in controversy with Pelagius, Augustine appeals to the now established practice of infant baptism. Beyond this, he has to keep in view the whole Church system. He must be loyal not only to experience but to the society which introduced him to the gospel, the organised Church. In this he contrasts with other evangelical champions. St. Paul worked before the Church was a fully developed institution. The Reformers worked and struggled while the Church was suffering disruption.

The outline of doctrine is sharpened in several respects. First, St. Paul's sinful humanity, which yearns for release and beats itself against its prison bars, has become a mere *massa perditionis*. If St. Paul sometimes at least recognises pagan virtues, Augustine is to be baffled by no awkward facts. Such virtues are merely specious sins.[1] This is a typical specimen of blind loyalty to logic. If God, if Christ, is absolutely necessary, how dare we recognise non-Christian virtue ? Yes, but if God has bestowed virtues on His non-Christian children, how dare we give the lie to God ?

Secondly, we find clearer definitions about Adam and about freewill. The latter technical term, not found in St. Paul,[2] plays a great part in Augustine's discussions. Adam possessed and lost the freedom which consists in power to do right. He possessed and transmitted, but transmitted disastrously impaired, power to choose.[3] There is a valuable rebuke here, apart from entanglement in the unhistorical figure of Adam and in the unsatisfactory theodicy based upon him, for those in any age who airily dispose of dark fears by a reference to freewill.

[1] It seems that the phrase *splendida vitia* is not actually in Augustine but its sense is.

[2] Said to have been made current by Tertullian.

[3] What Julius Müller calls 'Formal Freedom.' See Chapter XI.

Yet the unfortunate general outcome is that Adam was responsible because free, and that we are unfree though responsible. Moral difficulties are taking shape which cannot be proved to encumber the less elaborated statements of Paul.

Thirdly, there comes to be definitely taught a transmission of sin from Adam. Partly this means transmission of guilt. In the formulated Roman Catholic system, baptism removes the guilt of original sin. But original sin also implies transmission of what theology calls 'habitual' sin; and Harnack repeatedly warns us that this doctrine is brought into unpleasant connection with the facts of sexual reproduction.

Fourthly, grace, the remedy for sin, is sacramental. Baptism is no longer confined to adults; it is a thing for infants; and the benefits of baptism (Rom. vi) take on an aspect of which St. Paul could not have dreamed. Even St. Paul's ascriptions of deliverance from guilt to justifying faith lose their meaning for a theology which understands by justification the process in which character is renewed. What baptism begins, other sacraments continue.

Fifthly, Augustine definitely teaches the possibility of lapsing from a state of grace. This view may be necessarily involved in sacramentalism. If grace definitely comes through such channels, it would be glaringly immoral to affirm that, once received, it guarantees eternal salvation. On the other hand, amissibility of grace appears inconsistent with Augustine's assertion of predestination. The latter doctrine implies absolute grace, against which nothing stands; the doctrine we are noting teaches conditional grace promised to the right use of means. When Augustine is catholicised by later ages, effect is given to one side of his teaching at the expense of other elements. Yet perhaps this grace, which may be had and then lost again, is not for Augustine grace in the

deepest sense. He appears to calvinise upon the grace of perseverance. It is that which is called 'irresistible.' Is this, and this alone, grace indeed; this which God's hidden will regulates? Do we see even in Augustine the process by which predestinarian belief 'destroys the thought of the Church'?

It should be added that evangelicals will misapprehend not merely Augustine's teaching, but the better elements in Catholicism throughout the ages, unless they understand that sacraments are viewed as directly embodying God's goodwill and His purpose to save. Yet how treacherous an embodiment they are!

We pass with a single leap to the Reformation. Again we see a great soul making history by his inner conflicts. To Luther, more definitely than to Augustine, deliverance came through the words of St. Paul. Erasmus may seem to us as ruthlessly handled as Pelagius; perhaps the historian will add—it was quite as necessary. But the Lutheran Church, while strongly evangelical in its view of grace, is soon found dropping predestinarianism. We must look to Calvinist theology for the typical Protestant positions; and even Calvinism will not long endure in pristine strength or unmixed purity.

(1) Protestantism emphasises guilt, and the promises of escape by justifying faith in Christ's atonement.

(2) Calvinism does on system what Luther did for a time. It makes grace non-sacramental. It denies any specific blessing beyond what is found in the Word. Luther and Lutheranism teach that baptism is needed, and regenerates. It bewilders those of other communions to find these positions combined with the primary assertion of justification by faith alone.

(3) Post-reformation debate raises the issue between 'mediate' and 'immediate imputation' of Adam's sin. Placæus of Saumur, one of a lax and suspected school,

offered the first of these as a satisfactory formula; but orthodoxy, Calvinist and Lutheran alike, insisted on immediate imputation. And surely this harmonises better with Romans v, and is also franker than the alternative view. If *ex hypothesi* Adam's sin renders his posterity morally helpless from the first, what is gained by saying that their helpless acts 'mediately' involve the guilt of his all-determining act? In a sense, the affirmation of immediate responsibility for Adam's first sin is *the* dogmatic climax of hamartiology.

(4) Probably the Federal theology—covenant of works, with Adam; covenant of grace, with Christ—describes these findings better than any other terminology could do. While later in origin, and capable of being forced into the service of other systems, that language naturally expresses the very spirit of Protestant Augustinianism.

(5) Yet another controversy arose among the Reformed—the Lutherans having denied *in toto* absolute predestination—whether the divine decree appoints men's eternal lot independently of the fall of Adam (supralapsarianism of Gomarus and the school of Leyden; in England, Twisse) or is only to be interpreted as dealing, by way of punishment or of redemption, with the consequences of Adam's sin (Infralapsarian or Sublapsarian orthodoxy of the school of Dort). Strangely enough in such an age, neither party succeeded in ostracising the other; but the second doctrine, which was regarded as milder, was generally accepted as safer. Once again the orthodoxy, which so loudly blamed in others any disregard of 'good and necessary consequence,' lacked the courage of its own logic. But, if infralapsarianism sets aside the speculative motive for belief in foreordination, it has to lay all the more stress upon the hamartiological motive. As soon as mankind is sinful—then, although not till then—God may arbitrarily dispose of the eternal destinies of individuals. While the vessels are not yet 'fitted for de-

struction,' infralapsarianism thinks it wiser to keep silence. Thus the supposed theodicy based upon Adam's freewill is built into the very fabric of Calvinism as ordinarily professed. Will history admit the existence of such a person as Adam? Will conscience tolerate his holding such a place as representative (by 'covenant') of all mankind?

Twice over, then, if not oftener, orthodoxy has been deaf to logic. In the general rejection of tradueianism, and in the distaste for supralapsarianism among the Calvinistic *élite*, we see the remorseless exploiters of the logic of human sin trembling, hesitating, falling back on compromise. But, if at these points, why not elsewhere? If theology fears—reasonably enough—to shed one drop of blood, can it claim from the tormented mind and the outraged conscience its full pound of flesh? Many years ago, when fighting for life as a Christian, and for liberty as a preacher from the fetters of a seventeenth century creed, I noted the plea of 'mystery' on behalf of Calvinism when taxed with immoral consequences, and made the retort, 'Could you not have thought of this a little sooner?' I still hold that the retort was just.

By this time we have passed the historical watershed. The tide of logical inference had risen to its fullest in the Protestant scholasticism, threatening to drown out the faith and life it was meant to serve. Since then it has receded and is still going back. Yet there was one other proposal, more extravagant than any we have yet noted, which was put forward by orthodoxy at a later period. Had it made headway, we must have recognised it as the real climax in doctrine. I refer to Jonathan Edwards's reduction of Calvinism to a basis of philosophical determinism. Here the new world takes part in the problems of the old. Its representative is one of its greatest sons—a genius and a saint, not unworthy to be classed, if at a lower level, with Paul or Augustine or Luther. Edwards

met with little support. But he made one illustrious disciple. The noble Scottish Church leader, Thomas Chalmers, most human and lovable of all the men of the Evangelical Revival, startles us by appearing as an extremist at this point. As a whole, Augustinian orthodoxy in the past had presupposed libertarianism. As a whole, it declined to do otherwise, even in face of Edwards's or Chalmers's arguments.

We know how critics from outside take for granted that Calvinism must imply determinism. More than that; such critics often tell us that, in any theology, freewill is a paltry evasion. Nevertheless I am inclined to hold that Calvinism was well advised in repelling determinism. Unquestionably, we might simplify our systems of belief to a very great degree if we could hold that men were but the puppets of God's good pleasure, and that mechanism was universal. But surely more would disappear in this rearrangement than the inherited theodicy in terms of Adam's sin. Would not the very doctrine of sin disappear? Nay, might not Christianity itself vanish?

Only one further step was possible: to make the frank admission—which was far from the thoughts of Edwards or Chalmers—that God is indeed the author of sin. Low as orthodoxy sank at times, it never accepted this among the consequences of its logic. Its machinery for 'putting all the blame of sin upon the finite' might creak and groan, but it was well meant. Behind it there was a saving sense of responsibility in man and reverence towards God. It remained for Schleiermacher to play with the assertion, and for a living critical theologian, by no means an extremist—Dr. Carl Clemen—to urge it roundly in his monograph on sin (vol. i.; the *Biblical Doctrine*).[1]

[1] When he published this uncompleted fragment, Dr. Clemen wrote as a libertarian, though he has since announced himself as a determinist in his critique of Dr. Tennant in *Theol. Literaturzeitung*. Professor Otto Ritschl, son and biographer of Albrecht Ritschl, has also professed determinism.

This thesis is among the conclusions which critics of Calvinism have always imputed to its logic. Calvinists have always disowned it. And now comes forward one who is no Calvinist but a modern man, overpowered by the naturalistic prejudices which science generates. He unhesitatingly draws the appalling inference. Sin is the work of God—how else?

No one is so blind as not to see the logical probability which culminates in this conclusion. Is any one so dead in conscience as to receive it without the severest inner repugnance? Once more: if we cannot accept the extremer possible deductions from the thought of God or from the fact of sin, is it not well to take other forces than logic into counsel when we are drawing inferences in an obscure region of half comprehended truths? Must not our basis be ethical? [1]

The claim is made by hierarchical churches, or by Dr. Schechter for the synagogue, that they have wonderfully avoided 'the falsehood of extremes.' Perhaps the fact, so far as it is one, is due rather to the luck than to the skill or the merit of the legalist communions. They had the good fortune to frame no binding creed while sin was a burning centre of debate. Augustine was not related to any ecumenical symbol as Athanasius was. Partly too perhaps, their wisdom has been worldly rather than spiritual. Have they solved the problems or evaded them? Is not their course laid 'between the Scylla and Charybdis of aye and no'? For spiritual insight we must turn rather to the great extravagant souls—to Augustine, to Luther, perhaps even to St. Paul. Their systematisers in later generations too frequently intensify the extravagance and lose the insight.

[1] When Clemen quotes early Old Testament passages regarding divine causation of sin, is he not asking us to go back from ethical to pre-ethical stages of thought?

It is startling enough to realise how largely the life of Christianity has been bound up with terrible and oppressive doctrines. Again and again these have been offered to the world as the obverse to the truth of God's victorious grace in Christ; sometimes, to the truth of God's eternal power and Godhead. Age after age, evangelicalism, seeking to walk in the footsteps of Paul, has worked out a hardened and sharpened dogma of human worthlessness—since the Fall. This heavy shadow has been cast by the strong light of the Pauline gospel.

Not without risk can we break with Augustinianism. But what choice have we? How can we tempt God, to bind upon the neck of others a yoke which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear? But *we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus we shall be saved, even as they.*

CHAPTER X

THE PHILOSOPHICAL CONTRIBUTION

To any doctrine of sin which is to be valid for Christians, conscience must assent. Revelation and the experience of communion with God may modify, deepen, transform. But they cannot create the first beginnings in this region. The Bible addressed itself to men who knew—or who might and ought to have known—that they were sinners. There is a danger of being too much occupied with negative values, and theology has suffered not a little in that way. Yet assuredly something is to be learned from a doctrine of sin, and from its philosophical basis.

We must confine our brief review to modern times. Christianity entered into alliance with some of the ancient philosophies, notably in ethics with Stoicism. And we must confess that the same problems reappear in the modern as in the ancient mind. In a sense, the solutions will be identical; they are at least continuous. Yet both as moderns, and as Christians, ethical philosophers have rightly felt that they had to do their own work of exploration in the moral consciousness. We shall notice three great names: Butler, Kant, T. H. Green. It would be easy to add others; but probably, if time permitted, one could show that no other thinker, from our point of view, attains to the first three. The group of related ideas which we are studying are such as these—Personality (including personal identity), freewill, responsibility or conscience, (then, passing into negative

values) guilt, punishment. A philosophy which has not risen to such thoughts is non-Christian. A philosophy which claims to rise above these ceases to be Christian. Another connection of a curious kind links together our three chosen authorities. They all in different ways give in allegiance to idealism. They believe in a metaphysical basis of ethics. Duty is obedience to reason or to 'Nature.' It is true that Butler and Kant largely dissociate ethics from the uncertainties of metaphysics. Not so Green; yet his case inevitably raises in one's mind the doubt whether the 'metaphysic of knowledge' on which he relies really carries the structure of his ethical creed. What happened between the earlier and the later Deists, or between Carlyle and (say) Emerson, happens again between Green and most of his neo-Kantian or neo-Hegelian comrades. The pattern bleaches out. Earnestness diminishes, and the thought of sin is lost.

Butler was a man of profound moral earnestness, living in a shallow and frivolous age. All his work is done in the temper of an apologist. It might be true if harsh to say that he suffers from a certain narrowness of concentration. Had he studied the psychology of the moral nature as a scientific problem, had he stated the 'proper proofs of religion' rather than sought to commend it on the cheapest possible terms, he might have achieved even greater things.

He is remarkable for a habit of what may be called underplaying. He believes in Samuel Clarke's old-fashioned metaphysical ethics, but he waives them in debate. In the *Analogy* he 'chooses to decline matters of such abstract speculation.'[1] In the *Three Sermons* he studies 'human nature,' rather than 'nature,' or the 'abstract relations of things.' *Ye 'll tak' the high road and I 'll tak' the laigh road.*

[1] 'And to speak with caution when one does speak of them.'—I. vi., footnote.

But also, *I 'll be in Scotland afore ye.* The humbler line of argument is to prove equally good and more generally effective. There are metaphysics—other people may write about them. There are plain facts of experience, which no man can doubt; better prefer these. Has he not missed a *tertium quid*, which would have served him best of all? Does not his strength lie in bearing witness to moral experiences? These are not confined to metaphysicians; but neither are they written up in glaring black and white.

One result of Butler's choice is that he does not dwell on 'the proper motives to (natural) religion.'[1] He descends to lower levels of argument. He defends the fear of God now by pointing to the facts of man's inward moral constitution, now by studying the facts of man's history and the moral environment. Butler may well be styled a prophet of the conscience; yet he is one who rarely allows himself liberty of prophesying. Does conscience mean God? 'This part of the office of conscience is beyond my present design explicitly to consider.'[2]

It is noteworthy that the *Three Sermons* have a text, and a very Stoical text,[3] from St. Paul. They are aimed against a prejudice diffused by Hobbes, that man is necessarily swayed by pure egoistic selfishness. First, Butler replies, we have animal passions. Our 'particular propensions' do not aim at pleasure, but at the objects they crave as if by instinct. Part of our nature is therefore below the intellectual level of consistent selfishness. Secondly, there is a higher part of our nature—rational self-love. Nor is this the only higher part of our nature. Benevolence, thirdly, is a plain fact of 'natural history.'[4] No sophistries can hide it. And fourthly, conscience, a reflec-

[1] *Analogy*, Part I. conclusion, last sentence.
[2] Sermon ii.
[3] The corresponding section of the *Analogy*, Dissertation ii., quotes Epictetus by name. Now Butler quotes few writers, ancient or modern.
[4] Sermon i., footnote.

tive principle, approving or condemning motives and acts, speaks for itself, and demands supremacy.

This ground plan of the moral nature omits two principles which bulk largely in the *Analogy*—veracity and justice. Butler has different tasks in view in the two books. The *Sermons* prove the psychological existence of benevolence; the *Analogy* — covertly elsewhere, frankly in Diss. ii.—argues that benevolence is not the whole of ethical virtue.[1] The *Sermons* oppose egoism; the *Analogy* attacks a sickly sentimental benevolence, and tells us that we must be just before we can be generous. Can we dispute this? Whichever virtue stands highest, are not veracity and justice more imperious in their claim than benevolence? So too they are nearer akin to conscience, though for Butler conscience is a judge and scarcely at all a motive. His teleology insists that this judge within our breast must have been framed distinctively for exercising the function of judging; and his mechanical construction of the parts of the soul—untouched by any breath of evolutionism, whether empiricist or idealist —does not allow him to question the conception of conscience as an upper house that looks down, unmoved by desire, upon the strife of motives in a lower house. Yet we must not exaggerate Butler's severance of conscience from the virtuous promptings. There are 'moral faculties of action' as well as of knowledge (conscience, in the stricter sense).[2] And conscience, if obeyed, strengthens the influence of a good motive.[3] Further: does not Butler's analysis give valuable support to evangelicalism? Does not Christianity teach that we all know better than we act? Is not that the very gist of sin?

[1] This is the nearest Butler ever gets to defining the contents of virtue. But is his praise of self-love so very far removed from the idealist definition of morality as self-realisation?

[2] Dissertation, *sub init.*

[3] Sermon i.; it 'tends to restrain men from doing mischief . . . and leads them to do good.'

When Butler faces the doubt whether conscience is uniform in its responses, he gives 'a very characteristic answer'[1] in Sermon III.—'Almost any fair man in almost any circumstance' would judge rightly. He never waives the assertion of a moral nature, but only the *a priori* way of vindicating morality. Leslie Stephen may be excused for misinterpreting Butler's very curious conception of what constitutes an empirical fact; but there is no ground for the charge that Butler[2] breaks his word and argues unfairly. He does, indeed, exaggerate the uniformity of moral judgments. The wonder truly is this, not that conscience speaks infallibly, but that it speaks at all. When Dr. Tennant tells us that 'with all deference to etymology, "human education" would seem to consist less in drawing out than in putting in,'[3] one fears that he threatens destruction to Christianity. Unless there is a living response to external revelations and authorities, it is useless to talk of duty or sin or redemption. To neglect man's peculiar happiness, of growing up into the light; to ignore the basal unity and increasing convergence of moral judgments; is to quarrel with facts more fatally than Butler has done. Were there no objective principles of conduct, we must forfeit all that makes us human. The very pleasure of gossiping in terms of praise and blame would be lost. And we must lose the soul of history; the joys of comradeship, friendship, love; the communion of the saints; the peace of God.

The *Analogy* defends Christian belief, or in Part I. the wider if vaguer belief in future judgment. Its arguments are put forward as accessory to other lines of proof.[4] Apparently Butler once more gave himself the

[1] So Dr. Kilpatrick in his very stimulating and suggestive edition of the *Three Sermons*.
[2] *English Thought in Eighteenth Century*, i. p. 304.
[3] *Origin and Propagation of Sin*, p. 103.
[4] Part II. does include a chapter on the direct argument for Christianity, miracles, etc.

choice, Metaphysics or facts? and once more chose the latter. In some obscure sense he thinks he has put forward *a* proof,[1] though not *the* (metaphysical) proof. Algebraically his argument might be stated thus: God *plus* a moral nature *plus* immortality=[natural] religion. God he assumes (as proved especially by design). A moral nature is also assumed as plain matter of fact (Diss. ii). Immortality he supports by some inferior nature analogies (chap. i); but here again, if need be, he will fall back on Samuel Clarke (Diss. i). In Part I he argues that *alleged judgment by God hereafter* resembles *plain facts of moral reward and penalty here and now.* Punishment is specially emphasised. Unhappily, his love for underplaying led Butler to omit yet another assertion which he himself believed—freewill. He recognised it as a plain fact; apparently he had not defined it to himself as an ethical postulate. In his desire to meet determinists on their own ground, he argues, Why not? We are treated on earth as if we were free; may not religion be right in telling us similar things about the hereafter? A moralist, believing in freedom, but arguing on the assumption that it may be a mistake, ties his own hands. Yet in much of Part I we feel the throb of Butler's heart and conscience; and a profound moral appeal forces its way through less happy formulated arguments. Don't you know what moral suffering means? he cries. Don't you feel your dreadful sufferings to be just? Except in isolated sentences or paragraphs, none of his sermons is so deeply impressive.

To *Analogy* Part I we must also turn for Butler's best contribution to the doctrine of sin. He fears and hates sin. He knows it to be terrible in its potentialities; and as we read we share his solemn insight. There is no want of touch with moral reality in teachings like these. Part II of the *Analogy* reveals Butler as very loyal to traditional

[1] See second last paragraph of Part II. chap. viii.

theology, yet with some weakening. The forgiveness which our state of 'degradation' needs we find in Christ's sacrifice—somehow; but it is impossible to say how.[1] By sheer force of will Butler has remained a believer. He can give no reason for his distinctively Christian hope, beyond the external argument of miracle and the poor plea that probability or even possibility must sway our conduct. The truer supernatural—the evidence of experience—was a sealed book to one who regarded 'enthusiasm' as 'a very horrid thing.' The age in which he lived was all but strangling him. Nevertheless, if there has been backbone in the body or iron in the blood of English theology, we owe the fact chiefly to Butler.

If Butler recalls Deism to its better self, and builds a substructure for Christian belief and experience, Kant is a Deist almost without disguise. Yet his morality is very similar to Butler's, though reproduced rather than inherited; and his earnestness is scarcely less. But Kant is a more complex figure. He is no churchman; he is the typical German academic thinker. At least three main interests concern him. He will sweep away the vapid metaphysics of Wolff, with their hollow demonstrations. He will save science, endangered by Hume's sceptical dissolving of causation into sequence. He will vindicate morality. Thus he is largely preoccupied with the problem of knowledge. He set out to prepare a complete list of necessary truths; he ended by declaring that little or no speculative truth was within man's reach.

Speaking with unfortunate but necessary brevity, one might sum him up as follows: God, the world, the soul, so artificially balanced against each other by Wolff, disclose themselves as variant readings or interpretations of the same psychical content. Material nature is a

[1] The most startling statement of this position is found in the *Conclusion* to Part II: 'Indeed neither reason nor analogy,' etc.

collection of substances, necessarily united by causation in time, and working reciprocally on each other in space. The reality behind these objects we cannot know. On the basis of sensations awakened in us by unknown somewhats, our reason creates this orderly system. The system is valid, for our psychical experiences involve it; but it is not real. We all dream the same dream of a material world. Next, the soul or self is the unity of the experient hypostatised into an object. But here, again, we fail to touch reality. The supposed object remains unknowable. Lastly, God is the ideal of a completed experience. Even in God we have no ground, speculatively, for recognising anything beyond an ideal. The best speculative knowledge we have is that of matter as studied by science. And not even science is truly true.

For reasons satisfactory to himself if questionable to others, Kant was able to assign a better position to necessary *moral* beliefs. He is as little disposed [1] as Butler to admit that conscience can hesitate or waver. Like Butler again—nay, more confidently than Butler—he believes in a metaphysical vindication of ethics. Conscience is 'practical reason.' Its certainty is full and immediate.[2] Next, duty involves as a postulate freewill. A third moral truth—a remoter postulate—is immortality. In duty, the lower sensuous nature obeys the higher rational law. But never perfectly; hence, it must immortally approximate to the unreached ideal. The remotest certainty of all is God. We must make ourselves good. When we have done that, moral necessity requires that there should be a God who will make us happy.

Going over our own list of moral positions, we notice that Kant destroys personality speculatively, but indirectly brings it back as a moral truth implied in freedom and

[1] Dr. Tennant might leave out the great name of Kant when he is airily waving aside primary moral beliefs (*Origin and Propagation*, p. 219).
[2] Compare *Critique of Practical Reason*, preface.

immortality. Freewill is even more awkwardly circumstanced. Causal law is Kant's sheet anchor. He believes in determinism in order to believe in knowledge at all; and he speaks about the causation of human acts, as if science afforded absolute and not relative knowledge. If we had data enough, *we could predict human actions as exactly as we foretell eclipses*. Per contra conduct 'must' be free; and the antinomy is left in unrelieved sharpness. Responsibility, guilt, punishment are defended by Kant as moral truths (and theoretical mysteries).

Kantian ethics offer help to Christian philosophy and hamartiology in telling us that moral truth stands higher than any other knowledge, and that in obeying our own reason we know from inside what goodness means. But there are two drawbacks. Knowledge in other regions—knowledge, as such—seems to be a hollow thing. Secondly; the free and responsible actions of man are also, it seems, predetermined like eclipses.

In contrast with Butler, who hardly recognises conscience as a possible motive, Kant makes it exclusive. Reverence for moral law is to produce every good deed; untinged by love, whether to self, to man, or to God. Here Butler appears almost a laxist—any motive pointing externally in the right direction will suffice, according to him [1]—while Kant is the most intolerable of rigorists. Surely the truth is that moral reverence is indispensable, but that it cannot function alone. The law demands reverence; it is love that fulfils the law.

Kant's special handling of the guilt of sin is found in that section [2] on radical evil which sounded so unexpected a note in the eighteenth century. He rejects the Church doctrine of original sin, because it mixes up reason (or ethics) and nature—things that he has to insist on keep-

[1] Compare especially a paragraph in *Analogy*, Part I. chap. v.—'Against this whole notion of moral discipline,' etc.

[2] At the opening of *Religion within the Bounds of Mere Reason*.

ing apart. But facts compel him to recognise evil that seems to antedate personal choice. He notes three grades —frailty or weakness, impurity or mixed motives, perversity or depravity. The last alone is radically evil in the full sense. Even in it Kant sees no devilish love of sin *qua* sin, but a deliberate preference for personal pleasure as compared with moral law. Mankind may obey if obedience costs nothing; otherwise we will not obey. We select a wrong 'maxim.' In less technical language; every sin, if imputable at all, is in a sense deliberate, and wilfully subordinates duty to pleasure or to safety. It will be observed that, rigorist as he is, Kant has not included in his survey the more appalling developments of human wickedness.

When we pass from Kant to T. H. Green, we pass from a writer rich in distinctions and contrasts to one who is eager to unify. This is largely due to the influence of Hegel. Green is one of that important British nineteenth-century school of thinkers who found in Kant the true source of Hegel, and in Hegel the true interpretation of Kant. Yet, among all this group, Green is the writer in whom the flavour of Kant is most dominant and distinctive. The three interests noted in Kant reappear, but with a difference. Green is eager not to retrench but to establish metaphysics on the basis of the Kantian study of knowledge. He is incidentally eager to vindicate science. He is supremely concerned for morality and religion.

We repeat this in other words, if we describe Green as more whole-heartedly idealist than Butler or Kant. The basis of his *Prolegomena to Ethics*, on his own statement, is a 'Metaphysic of Knowledge,' the same Kantian doctrine which is shunted by many to-day as a human idiosyncrasy under the name 'Theory of Knowledge.' When we turn back to Green's earlier Introductions to Hume's

Treatise, we realise how entirely he was a man of one message. To him, Hume was the writer who best revealed the sceptical drift of naturalistic empiricism, half veiled in the thinking of Mill or Sidgwick. When Hume is cross-examined, he betrays the naked truth of the case. So empiricism itself must be abandoned. Reality and the work of the mind are not opposite things.[1] Reality consists in [2] relations, and therefore is essentially the creation of mind. In thus defending knowledge against Hume, we are also rescuing the essence of morality. An intelligent being, who knows permanent objects revealed in permanent relations, must also live in the light of permanent interests and ideals. Speculative reason becomes practical reason. These are not, as with Kant, two distinct things, only one of which is valid. They are obverse and reverse of a single shield. Green's earlier work already states the doctrine of the *Prolegomena*, that knowledge and goodness in us are the communication to man of the knowledge and goodness of an eternal consciousness.

Personality is therefore attributed to God and man—though both books reveal a tendency to name the divine consciousness 'it' rather than 'he.' So, too, man is immortal; with certain hesitations.[3]—After all, can human personality be fully vindicated in terms of mere knowledge? Though goodness is dear to Green, he treats it as a mere automatic corollary to rationality. Were man nothing more than the Hegelian spectator in the stalls, watching the pageant of the universe, would he be more than a casual focus of permanent ideal truths, or a temporary strain or knot in the infinite ether of the divine principle? One may retort what Edward Caird said of

[1] Does not the new psychological doctrine of 'constructions' revive this prejudice?

[2] One quotes rather than endorses *this* formula.

[3] Green significantly approves Kant's rejection of soul-substance. Compare also the rather ominous fragment, *Works*, vol. iii, p. 159.

Butler[1]; Green is profoundly moral because of his personality, not because of his philosophy. He has broken with scepticism; and that is well. But he has put all his trust in a one-sided intellectualism, whose more natural outcome is the serial or relative view of moral truth found in Hegel, in Mr. Bradley's *Ethical Studies*, and in the later work of the same formidable thinker. Green found his way to God. Building on that Rock, he escaped from the unending flux of mentalities in which pantheistic philosophy drowns. But Green scarcely took sufficient pains to justify his supreme interest in righteousness and in its divine source.

In regard to freedom, once more, Green unifies—portentously. There are not two worlds, but one; therefore freewill in a libertarian sense is a dream. And it would be an empty privilege! The only determination we have cause to fear is naturalistic determination, like that of things. Our freedom is assured as persons, because—in comparison with everything else on earth—rational beings are identical in a unique sense with the divine principle. Kant's doctrine of mortal 'autonomy' is preserved—man obeys himself and only so is moral. (He obeys the law within; he knows that right is right.) Power of contrary choice, which at least in a sense Kant vindicated, is swept away.

To responsibility, whether logically or illogically, Green is perfectly loyal. The love of goodness is enthroned in his heart. He may startle us when he tells us that the Greek analysis of the virtues amounts to the recognition that goodness is an inward thing. But certainly Green's own goodness is inward. Institutions do not exhaust it. More rigorist at this point even than Kant, he asks us to regard increasing virtuousness as the only reward of virtue.

Green does not shrink from the negative values of his

[1] MS. notes of Glasgow Class Lectures, *penes me*; they treat Butler as a pure 'Lockian.'

ethics. Twice over, at least, he speaks of sin. 'Consciousness of Sin' is written in inverted commas in his own analysis of his introduction to the ethical part of Hume's *Treatise*; and in one of his Lay Sermons he writes: 'This is the foppery of men who want new excuses for old sins. It is still our sin and nothing else that separates us from God.' [1]

If we are right in our criticisms, it seems doubtful whether any of the great masters of ethics whose work we most prize has stated the case perfectly. Butler inclines perilously to empiricist and phenomenalist methods. Kant is half-sceptical. Green repels scepticism at the risk of making moral thought a mere transient stage in the procession of intellectual beliefs. Nevertheless, in the agreements of these three great writers, we recognise fundamental truths regarding responsibility and guilt which the conscience of mankind endorses—truths which are reaffirmed and reinterpreted in the Christian doctrine of sin and in the gospel of redemption.

[1] *Works*, vol. ii, p. 248.

CHAPTER XI

THE EFFORTS AT THEOLOGICAL RESTATEMENT

IT would help us little to register the merely negative and critical movements of the eighteenth century. Serious effort to re-think the problems of thought is later in the field of theology proper than in that of philosophy. Catholic theology cannot do this work, or can do it only by means of elaborate evasions. Protestantism is pledged to the task. The great pioneer is Schleiermacher.

One of his fundamental characteristics is that he seeks to interpret *the pious* or *the Christian consciousness*. A difficulty at once arises. What is the relation between these two expressions? Schleiermacher never quite solves that riddle. Too often this champion of history against abstractions, this contemner of so-called 'natural' religion as a piece of utter artificiality, sacrifices the peculiarities of Christianity to general theories of the nature of religion. Still the merit remains, that he summoned Christian thought to concentrate upon the central things of the religious life, and that he set up the ideal of an autonomous theology, sovereign in its own department of knowledge.

Schleiermacher's own philosophy insists upon God's exclusive causality; not confining it to the region of grace, where the pious mind may have special reason for holding that God works all in all, but seeing it everywhere. One may repel Martineau's view, that Calvinism is no better than a veiled Pantheism; but in Schleiermacher, that child

of the Reformed branch of Protestantism, that enthusiast for Spinoza, we see a pantheising tendency fully victorious. One of the motives of historic Augustinianism survives the others. We get something like a supralapsarianism unburdened with moral ideas about sin and responsibility. Can it be Christian to allow so much influence to a questionable speculative conception of grace?

Schleiermacher's Dogmatic represents Christianity indifferently as the completion of human nature, and as its redemption out of sin. There is Biblical support for the twofold treatment; and the modern mind will welcome it, if the programme is honestly worked out in each direction.

Sin proper is characteristically interpreted—amid hints or germs of several theories—in terms of feeling. When the God-consciousness affects us to pain, there is sense of sin. Guilt exists for us rather than for God, though He appoints that we shall have such a consciousness. True, Schleiermacher follows the orthodox tradition which defines all suffering as penal—'the social immediately, the natural mediately.' But this again is the merely though necessarily human outlook. Will the sense of guilt survive this exposition? Especially as it is added that God is the author of sin, though not (we are told) in the same full sense in which He is the author of redemption, and reveals His presence to the heart in pleasure.

Another tribute to orthodoxy appears, and another twofold view of doctrine, in Schleiermacher's attitude towards original sin. Such sin is the collective guilt of the race—a position which would lend itself well to a free-will philosophy. But Schleiermacher is a determinist. If sin comes from within, he finds that it also comes from without, and that this original sin constitutes our absolute need of redemption. Here the two sides of the doctrine seem to be hopelessly irreconcilable.

One novel suggestion is the definition of Christ as the

man in whom God-consciousness was absolute—the sinless one who redeems us by making us share His sinless perfection. Forgiveness itself, like every remaining blessing, is secondary; it depends on the experiences of communion with the Holy One.

Lastly, it is natural that Schleiermacher should incline to assert the restoration of all souls. Speculative motives are supreme if ethical considerations co-operate. In the light of so great a hope, it seems less terrible that meantime God should ordain that men shall sin and yet should treat them as guilty. But is such a train of thought Christian?

Influenced by Schleiermacher and Kant, though criticising both freely, wrote Julius Müller. He belongs to the group rather disparagingly termed 'mediating' theologians. But who that is not blind to modern problems, yet declines to break with the faith of Christ, merits any other description? His leading positions are as follows.

First of all, Müller will be loyal to the consciousness of responsibility. Any philosophy which falsifies the findings of conscience he sweeps aside. In his hands, as so often, this attitude takes the form of an intuitionalist philosophy. One respects the position, even while questioning whether it is philosophically secure. In contrast with Kant's leaven of scepticism Müller might be called a 'dogmatist.' He believes in a divine knowledge superior to time, yet he holds that time, space, matter are the forms of this finite world, and that God knows the things of time as past, present, or future—in nowise 'transformed' for His consciousness. Secondly, Müller desires to be loyal to man's absolute need of redemption as a fallen being.[1] Human freedom indeed is not lost, however flawed.[2] Assertions of *total* depravity must be carefully made, or

[1] ii. pp. 75, 239 (*Christian Doctrine of Sin*, tr. Urwick).
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 237.

redemption becomes unthinkable. But Kant's postulate of a sinner's capacity for self-reformation is, from every point of view, dismissed. Freewill does not extend so far as that. Thirdly, Müller will have no parleyings with the 'Medusa's head' of absolute predestination.[1] He bases his rejection upon moral grounds—surely with convincing force. Or, if predestination to eternal life or eternal doom is to be credited, it must be held as a mystery, in spite of moral difficulties.

These three points taken together exhibit Müller as a loyal Lutheran—dismissing the predestinarian motive of Augustinianism, laying all the greater stress on the evangelical assertion of sinful man's helplessness.

The attitude taken up towards Scripture is curious. Müller bases each doctrinal position upon an appeal to the Christian soul; then he leads proof that the Bible says the same thing. Is such an atomistic appeal to the Bible historically satisfactory? Is it even truly reverent?

A great deal of orthodoxy remains. Law is universal in God's relation to man; it persists under Christianity. Literal death is the wages of sin. Christ redeems through bearing punishment as a substitute.[2] The essence of forgiveness is release from penalty.[3] Concurrently, Müller maintains that sin is selfishness. Such a doctrine is often understood as a refusal to regard sin as guilt before God. Müller does not mean it so. Sin for him is emphatically sin against God; and yet, while not every sin is an act of selfishness—*e.g.* dishonesty for another's benefit—life as a whole leads up to the one great choice between obedience and self-will.

Much space is given to what is regarded as a correct account of providence. Müller fears that an excessive doctrine of divine causality (like Schleiermacher's) will

[1] *Christian Doctrine of Sin* (tr. Urwick), vol. ii. p. 239. The same image is used of Spinoza's paralysing logic, i. p. 153, note.
[2] *Ibid.*, i. p. 255. [3] *Ibid.*, i. p. 246.

destroy morality and freewill. God does not always act. He limits Himself in granting freedom. He permits but does not in any sense cause sin. He foreknows it—by intuition, not calculation—without predestinating it. There is room for man's proper activity, and for the doleful consequences of human sin.

The great novelty is the doctrine of *non-temporal* self-determination to evil. Here Müller is Kant's pupil. He thinks he avoids, but practically repeats, Origen's doctrine of a *prenatal* fall. Christ's human soul (we again hear) was tried and stood.[1] Others also may well have stood, though it seems that Scripture forbids our confusing these with the holy angels.[2] Nor are devils of human kindred. It is a clever touch to provide that not all human souls, nor even all with one great exception, fell during the trial. Müller finds that we cannot safeguard freedom and responsibility except by this theory of non-temporal sin. Conscience blames us for every fault. We are biassed; yet we are guilty, and know it. How can we be, unless somehow we gave ourselves the bias? Every other road is stopped! Ordinary doctrines of imputation or hereditary corruption are immoral. Orthodoxy must not claim Müller's support unless it agrees with him here. The reasoning deserves attention; the authority of the man is high. Yet, can the coherence of the gospel depend on such an inference, of which Origen barely had a glimpse, which Kant revived, which Müller, vigorously rectifying Kant, first stated in its truth? Müller further holds that the Fall was confirmed or deepened by the transgression of the first man. Mainly, this is a tribute to biblicism. Partly also Müller's belief in surviving freewill raises the question: How if Adam had behaved better? For he believes in the historical Adam. But this pleonastic fall-doctrine will scarcely win acceptance upon its merits.

It is natural enough that Müller should hold to the possi-

[1] *Christian Doctrine of Sin*, ii. p. 368. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 367, 368.

bility of the soul's eternal loss. Reason for believing in the actual loss of some souls, fewer or more, is said to be furnished by Christ's teaching regarding a sin against the Holy Spirit.

Much the greatest contribution to British theology in the nineteenth century is John M'Leod Campbell's *Nature of the Atonement*. While no philosopher, Campbell appeals at every turn to the 'conscience,'[1] and thus strikes the right keynote. His technical equipment as a theologian was not comparable to Schleiermacher's or Müller's or Ritschl's. And the Bible remains to him in almost every respect the preternatural book of orthodoxy. But he dug deep, and brought treasures to light. He is an ethical critic of doctrine. Before intellectual criticism began in our country, Campbell and his like-minded but so different *confrère*, Erskine,[2] had exercised a moral criticism. This is the highest and most Christian type of theological progress. To be intellectually up to date is desirable. To be true to conscience is indispensable.

As a Christian teacher, Campbell was forced to break with Calvinism. He preached the Gospel at Row, as one of themselves said, to 'a sleeping people,' urging the need to believe God's word. *What* are we to believe? they would rejoin. How can we trust the offers of a Saviour who purposes to show favour to an arbitrarily chosen some and merciless 'justice' to the rest? Not so, said Campbell; He died for all, as the Bible says; He loves all! So the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland deposed him, and he was compelled by religious duty to become a theological reformer. Involuntarily, as he tells us, his thoughts travelled on from the extent to the *nature* of the Atonement. He taught a little flock that gathered round him—he never would found 'a sect'—

[1] *E.g.* p. xxii. (5th ed., 1878).
[2] Of Linlathen. A. J. Scott was a third in the partnership.

and he read and prayed and brooded. Then he spoke in words which, though touchingly formless as literature, would live as a devotional classic if they had no value as theology. But their value even in that respect is little short of the highest.

The primary element in his theology is the thought of God as Father.[1] If Dr. R. S. Candlish, strong in the traditional appeal to law, dismissed 'vague qualities of fatherliness' as irrelevant to serious thought, Campbell must have felt that his critic might as well have spoken of a vague quality of deity.

Only second to this is his belief in the Lord Jesus.[2] He raises the question whether[3] the Atonement or the Incarnation—both being assumed to be true and vital—is primary, and unhesitatingly pronounces for the latter. At the same time he guards himself against proposals to omit the remedial aspect of the Gospel.[4] He elsewhere[5] expresses regret that theologians have not sufficiently taken 'the life of Christ as their light,' referring to John i. 4 in a sense of his own. If one may venture upon a criticism, Campbell too much assumes the incarnation of the Son of God as a datum, and says what such a fact once given must imply; we ought rather to infer what Christ is from our own and the Church's experience of what He does. Christology must affirm what is implied concerning Christ's person in His work, or else be silent. Whether this criticism be right or wrong, Campbell's procedure is characteristic and determinant of his thinking.

Much of orthodoxy remains. Campbell accepts the theology of moral law and the Pauline hamartiology.[6] Romans vii. is normative.[7] Death is the wages of sin; and

[1] Title of Chapter xv. [2] See *e.g.* pp. 123, 324. [3] P. xvi.
[4] *E.g.* p. xxi. [5] P. 45.
[6] Yet with an emphasis upon *ignorance* which anticipates Ritschl. I made remarks on further coincidences in preface to *Essays Towards a New Theology*, 1889.
[7] P. 11.

therefore in experiencing death Christ furnished 'an adequate ground' for redemption from law.[1] On the other hand, Campbell brushes aside original sin [2] because 'usually present to the mind as a dogma and not as a consciousness.' This incidental verdict, gentle and fatal like a tap from a lion's paw, suggests a whole apparatus of criticism and construction.

Campbell's central thesis is that the atoning death of Christ must be regarded not as a punishment but yet as an expiation. Following a hint in Jonathan Edwards, which for Edwards himself was an empty logical possibility, he argues that atonement was made through Christ's confessing our sins. This repentance or *quasi* repentance on behalf of the race into which Christ had entered was glorifying to righteousness and to God. As Christian and as biblicist, Campbell definitely maintains a 'retrospective' as well as a 'prospective' reference in Christ's work. At times he almost echoes older views.[3] Christ receives into His bosom and 'absorbs' the righteous wrath of God against sin.[4] Again [5] Campbell himself admits that '*the sinless dying for sin* is that in the history of Christ's sufferings, the just for the unjust, which most approaches the conception of the innocent being punished for the guilty.' If one may venture a second criticism, Campbell is right in his plea for the 'retrospective,' but he has not harmonised his sayings regarding it with his other positions. Those who disliked this strain in him were so far in the right; there is something incongruous in his utterances. He has not fully solved his vast problem. But what man or what angel can do more than seek to 'look into' these sacred depths? The immense advance, from the legal to the ethical, stands. Legally, it is wrong to

[1] *Nature of Atonement*, p. 110. [2] P. 340.

[3] It is worth notice that that eminent controversialist, the late Dr. Rigg of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, accepted Campbell as satisfying the rather exacting standard of his orthodoxy (*Modern Anglican Theology*, preface).

[4] P. 117. [5] Note to Chapter XIII.

punish twice for the same crime. So argued orthodoxy. Morally, it is right to forgive, wrong not to forgive, when there is repentance. Which explanation is more Christian ?

When we turn to Albrecht Ritschl we encounter a great biblical scholar and theologian. His leading work is again a monograph—Biblical, Historical, and Constructive —upon Atonement. Yet of necessity it deals pretty fully with sin ; indeed, as he says himself, it contains almost the whole of a dogmatic system. With Ritschl must be associated Hermann Schultz, in virtue of a book explaining the *Godhead of Christ* in the light of a new reading of the *communicatio idiomatum*. The third member of this partnership, Professor W. Herrmann of Marburg, happily still survives. He, too, is a colleague and fellow-worker, not a disciple. In Ritschl we often feel with pain that we are dealing with a technical expert, almost with a schoolman. He is a sneering controversialist. He disclaimed [1] the idea that theological study could be expected to edify. All this is a chilling change from M'Leod Campbell ; but, when we pass to Herrmann's writings, or better still enter his class-room, we find ourselves in a pure and intense devotional atmosphere. Elusive as the thought often seems, one recognises that, if words have any meaning, this is an evangelical Christian, all the more interesting if his thought does not move with Paul exclusively between the poles of sin and grace. If we concentrate now upon Ritschl, that is only because he is the more systematic writer. Even in him genuine religious and moral interest flows deep and strong. No one has offered more suggestions to modern theology. Naturally they are not all of equal value.

Space will not permit us to do more than name in a single word the general basis of his theology. First, he teaches [2]

[1] As reported to me by a friend who attended his lectures.
[2] In ed. 3, not in ed. 1.

with Kant a practical but not a speculative knowledge of God. Secondly, he finds this knowledge given by revelation in Jesus Christ, and seeks to define Christianity by *contrast* with all other religions as uniquely endowed with belief in God's perfect providence. Thirdly, he revives against Schleiermacher the vital union between the New Testament and the Old. The apostles could give an abiding interpretation to Christianity [1] because they knew from inside the religious ideas of the Old Testament. Fourthly, the essential supremacy of Christ is due to his place not simply as a man absolutely conscious of God but as founder of a fellowship—the Christian church [2]—in which and in which alone men may know God. Fifthly, what is called from the point of view of religion or worship the church becomes from the point of view of duty the Kingdom of God—a human fellowship of perfect love finding subordinate manifestations in the family and the state. Ritschl and his friends are resolute against revival methods. The individual is simply the child of the religious and moral community. Within that realm created by Christ spiritual victory is possible. Nothing more can be said as to the beginnings of Christian life.

The progress of biblical criticism has created embarrassment for some of Ritschl's findings; but, instead of discussing the merits of these wider positions, we must turn to his views regarding sin. First of all, it should be noticed that Ritschl's doctrine of providence places the problem of sin in a secondary position. The primary religious blessing is personal fellowship with the divine Father who cares for us.

[1] Ritschl has been criticised for teaching, unhistorically, a 'fall' from New Testament Christianity when the Gentiles became trustees of the gospel; but one notices that even Professor K. Lake, who pushes to the utmost the continuity between St. Paul's thought and Catholicism, has to contrast (as Ritschl did before him) those who came over as converts with a later generation who too easily inherited a divine creed. Is not this a 'fall'? Is it not historical?

[2] Community, *Gemeinde*. In Luther's version of the creed the *communio sanctorum* appears as the 'Gemeine der Heiligen.'

In lieu of original sin Ritschl establishes a doctrine of social heredity. Unlike Schleiermacher, he teaches collective *as against* original sin. Unlike Pelagius, he teaches inheritance of evil not merely by individual imitation of bad examples but by inbreathing of a tainted life. Our finite fleshly nature surrounds us with temptations while we are unformed; and social pressure proves irresistible.

Ritschl revives from the Bible the non-Pauline doctrine of two kinds or stages of sin. At this and other points Ritschl has been raked with criticism from both sides, orthodox and radical. Let us at least understand before we condemn. Apart from slight waverings towards dissolving guilt into mere ignorance,[1] Ritschl is on firm biblical ground. Yet his application of the doctrine is drastic. He finds it to be 'most important for the doctrine of Atonement.' Briefly, he erases from the Gospel everything remedial. Small sins, of 'ignorance,' need no expiation; great sins admit of none. The sinner whom God saves is recognised as exceptionally worth recovering. Ritschl must have known that this was not Paul's teaching. Characteristically, he omits to notice the fact.

Another doctrine much emphasised by Ritschl is that sin must be estimated by the standard of the Kingdom of God, not by a supposed standard furnished by natural religion. In a sense, all must agree; yet one fears that Ritschl once again is evading the task of showing man to be responsible for his guilt.

Unlike Müller, and more clearly than Campbell, he interprets forgiveness in terms of ethical personality. To forgive is to readmit to personal fellowship. External penalties may be withdrawn—that is not essential forgiveness if the other is lacking. External penalties may remain—they do not touch essential forgiveness if the other is there. Probably this teaching could be paralleled else-

[1] *Justification*, vol. iii., English tr., pp. 377, 378.

where. We who have learned it from Ritschl can never forget our debt of gratitude through him to God.

Less satisfactory yet most interesting is Ritschl's abolition of the very thought of justice from God's dealings with His children. Righteousness in God is not a twofold thing of rewards and punishments but the steady following out of a great purpose. God forgives not through expiation but because it is worth while to rescue a repentant sinner. The forgiven child ceases to ask for a high place in God's kingdom. There is no high nor low there—all is wonderful and all divine. One loving cup passes into every hand. Woe to those who forfeit it! All this is finely felt; yet surely the certainty stands: 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.' When Ritschl brushes aside Romans ii. 13, etc., as mere accommodation to Pharisaism, he sophisticates. Reconcile it with Gospel mercy as we may, intellectually perhaps not at all, we must teach that the Father judges according to every man's work.

Lastly, Ritschl inclines to conditional immortality and the annihilation of the impenitent. He perhaps even exaggerates the eschatological connotation of divine 'wrath' in the New Testament. But he insists that the Old Testament substructure is destroyed. It is no longer possible to treat calamity as a proof of God's anger. And he finds the eschatological vision encompassed with mystery. So he declines dogmatising.

When one of the most illustrious of Ritschl's disciples, Professor Harnack, has to speak of Augustine, he betrays a much greater sympathy for the Pauline hamartiology. He pointedly rejects a view which Ritschl more than once affirms, that Augustine's chief motive for teaching original sin was a desire to vindicate infant baptism. Harnack finds Augustinianism almost purely Christian. Yet, when we expect him to adhere to Church orthodoxy, he breaks

away. It turns out that we cannot 'write history' on the basis of such experiences. Elsewhere Harnack warns us that the historian is pledged never to acknowledge miracles (even if they happened ?), historical science assuming the regular working of law. Does the historian then tie his arms and blind his eyes before getting to work ? Perhaps Harnack's is just one fresh way of recognising irreducible mystery in this dark region. Anyway it is significant that this great scholar, more of a radical in theology than Ritschl, eloquently and passionately renews the confession—with whatever reserves—of helpless human dependence upon divine grace.

CHAPTER XII

THE CONTRIBUTION OF EVOLUTIONARY SCIENCE

MODERN discussions in other regions besides that of philosophy have influenced the doctrine of sin. The genius of Darwin affected all speculation when it secured belief in the evolution of distinct species of living creatures from a common ancestry by processes of natural law. The evolutionary idea itself was not new; its acceptance by science as an accredited working hypothesis, and soon as—to some extent at least—undoubted fact, changed the whole situation. What one speaks of in such terms is the fact of relationship between 'distinct' species. From this must be carefully distinguished Darwin's subtle and ingenious theory of the method of their evolution—viz. natural selection. The two are often confused. Even T. H. Green writes as if, in regions where an evolution of biological species has occurred, natural selection and nothing else must have been at work. There are even persons who talk glibly about natural selection without ever apprehending what it means.[1]

The first effect upon theology of the new belief was to blot out innumerable supposed divine interventions. Where men now accepted natural evolution they had previously asserted special creation. Hybrids being infertile, it had been held that from their first existence onwards the different species of living creatures must have been isolated

[1] There is a good statement in Dr. F. J. Hall's *Evolution and the Fall*—a book whose theological standpoint the present writer cannot pretend to share.

from each other, and that each must have owed its being to a distinct historical act of the divine will. Such a belief began to look childish. In a moment God seemed to recede indefinitely further from the human imagination. He had been, so to speak, barely out of sight; and the works of His fingers had everywhere borne the marks of their origin. Now nature must count for more and God apparently for less. Clearly grasped and soberly weighed, the new conception might commend itself as a more majestic reading of the divine method. But at the moment the proof of evolution came to pious minds as a blow.

It ought still further to be granted, I believe, that the central theory of Darwinism, Natural Selection by struggle, is also at least part of the facts. There was need of a very keen and original mind to frame the hypothesis, but—in spite of challenges by several brilliant critics upon metaphysical and scientific grounds—it seems to commend itself. Granted a prolific nature—granted superabundance of offspring—only a small percentage can reach maturity or reproduce themselves; and elimination must, on the average and in the long run, spare those organisms which are best adapted to their conditions. The process must maintain, perhaps even augment, telic efficiency.

To regard natural selection as the sole cause of evolution is to go beyond Darwin. He believed in sexual selection; he even believed in the inheritance of acquired qualities, or 'the Lamarckian factor'; possibly he did not fully realise how greatly this factor, if at work at all, must surpass in strength and efficacy any slow and indirect process of elimination. It was Weismann who made natural selection all-explanatory. He seems to have proved something. It seems established that inheritance of acquired qualities, if it exists at all, does not work so freely as had been supposed. But one gathers that recent opinion tends to recoil from the full vigour and rigour of Weismannism.

It might be possible to show arithmetically [1] that natural selection must be supplemented by some other causal processes if we are to do justice to the facts of evolution. Elimination has far less scope with the highest organisms. The codfish produces innumerable spawn; the higher mammals have few, or two, or one at a birth. Are they less efficient or less adapted? Have we any reason to hold that evolutionary advance slackens as we rise in the scale? If not, something else has been taking place beyond elimination of the unfit and selection of the fittest.

Once again, natural selection has been regarded as the most anti-teleological of all doctrines of the evolution of species. And it may be among the least teleological, among the most mechanical, of such doctrines; but, confined as it is by Darwin within the region of life, I cannot see that it negatives teleology. Ancient thinkers, who held that universes arose out of chaos by a process of *quasi* trial-and-error, may have been entitled to claim that they were escaping from the tyranny of purpose to the freedom of chance. But surely not so Darwin. He postulates life and heredity. Where life is successfully preserved and transmitted to offspring, something is in existence which is very far removed from blind hazard. Weismannism may be extravagant; but not even this extravagance would explode teleology.

Darwin, however, moved on from the general problem of the *Origin of Species* to the more special problems of the *Descent of Man*. The argument was still similar. The reasonable and moral race, which had always grouped itself apart from the beasts, belonged to the same continuous process of natural development, and owed its origin to the same factors. Point by point, Darwin claimed to show that what had been regarded as distinctively human qualities were pro-

[1] Professor Karl Pearson has called attention to the need for testing the magnitude as well as establishing the existence of this or that factor in evolution.

longations of merely animal traits. On the fact that mankind are descended from brutes he certainly won his case.

Plainly, theology could not fail to be affected. First of all, the historicity of the opening chapters of Genesis received a final and fatal blow. Many theologians, age after age, had seen parable rather than historical fact in these narratives; but the new arguments went home with fresh power to the average mind. Nor did it mend matters for conservative spirits when critical historians took over the documents and detected in these early chapters myth—purified and elevated by the prophetic spirit, yet still fundamentally nature-myth rather than moral allegory.

Moreover, if the fall of Adam vanished from the page of history, what was to take its place? We do not blame men for actions which they are physically unable to avoid. Can we, upon the new theory, blame the race? Is morality to disappear? If not in the case of a historical Adam and Eve, if not within a literal Garden of Eden, was it ever possible for mankind as a race to refuse the evil and choose the good? The inevitableness of sin had been mooted as a speculative hypothesis, but the Christian church had always refused it. Does science show it to be a fact? You may question the ultimate metaphysical truth of scientific findings, but you can hardly deny that they are in some sense true.

There are those who challenge continuity at the point where the soul must be supposed to have appeared. It is well known that the hypothesis of natural selection dawned upon two minds simultaneously—Darwin and A. R. Wallace. To the honour of both, they presented their views as partners, not as rivals; to the honour of Wallace, he never grudged the more brilliant and more laborious Darwin his larger share of fame. It interests us to recall that Wallace—not a Christian in creed but a Spiritualist—argued for creative interference as necessary to account for the human soul. There is therefore high scientific authority for maintaining that some discontinuousness

may be asserted by loyal believers in evolution. We might add that Dr. F. R. Tennant, who represents within English theology an evolutionary doctrine of sin, holds to a 'purified creationism' against all forms of traducianism. One assumes that Dr. Tennant would account for brute mind by traducian process; if so, he also must postulate a special forth-putting of divine power when rational and moral mind first appeared. The creation of 'Adam's' soul appears thus a thing as novel, if not as isolated, as upon Dr. Wallace's view. Yet against both thinkers one must express a doubt whether such a view is truly germane to evolutionism. It asks us to admit an exception and a limit to evolutionary process. We must think twice before we agree.

When evolutionism deals with the problem of sin it inclines to exclude any possible discontinuity between man and brute. It stands for what Mr. John Fiske [1] has called the 'Brute Inheritance'—a view represented among theologians by Pfleiderer in Germany and Dr. Tennant in England. Things natural and innocent in the life of lower animals travel on into the region of reason and conscience, and are condemned. It would be strange to suggest that the holy Creator stepped forward to originate the human soul, and ordained that the newly shaped spirit should be served heir to the *Karma* of brute ancestors. Even upon Dr. Tennant's incidental and inferential formulation, the theory looks anomalous. Evolutionism tells us that morality is nothing else than to

> 'Move upward, working out the beast
> And let the ape and tiger[2] die.'

Sin is treated as inevitable, yet none the less evil.

[1] I believe.

[2] Voltaire's analysis of the composition of his fellow-countrymen is applied by Tennyson to all mankind; in the sense, obviously, that we sin by yielding to ancestral brute promptings.

There is no room here to investigate Tennyson's evolutionism. It is strange enough to reflect that his 'nature red in tooth and claw' antedates

Over against evolutionism the theological position has been ably argued by Dr. James Orr. He stands for discontinuity, possibly at the origin of the human soul, certainly at the emergence of sin. On moral grounds he postulates that the race as such must have had its opportunity to choose innocence. He accepts the ordinary evolutionary categories, and describes sin as an acquired quality. Thus he finds it vital for the Christian position to refute Weismannism, so far as to show that at least certain acquired qualities may be inherited. Superficial acquirements, he grants, need not be heritable; pervasive influences, such as sinfulness, must be. Original sin is thus reduced to hereditary sin; probably other modern representatives of orthodoxy could be quoted in the same sense. This seems morally dubious. Should we gain much in the court of conscience by transferring this damning heredity from brutes to a hypothetical first human ancestor?

Both views—the Brute Inheritance and the theory of sin as a formidable Acquired Quality bequeathed by the first man—are specimens of what has been called Biological Religion.[1] They both employ biological categories without criticism. They both assume that these may be applied just as they stand to the moral history of man.

Much may be said for continuity between the brute life and the human. In animals one finds the beginning or foreshadowing of moral good, of moral evil, possibly even of religion. Everything seems to be present except imputation or responsibility. Again, man is still a subject

Darwin. Of course, he wrote after Lamarck; and Sir W. Robertson Nicoll holds that Robert Chambers's *Vestiges* must have strongly influenced *In Memoriam*.

[1] The title of Dr. T. C. Finlayson's searching and fine-spirited examination of Henry Drummond's early book, *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*. One might have suggested that the book was not biological enough—that it was mechanical. In any case it lacked the moral and the spiritual, as Finlayson showed.

Biological religion might be better represented by the late Principal Simon's writings, or by Mr. W. D. M'Laren's *Our Growing Creed*.

for the biologist. It is right to make the experiment, what we can learn by studying man as an animal. The physician must mainly—but not, one thinks, entirely—contemplate him as such. On the other hand, the *differentia* of mankind thrusts itself upon our notice, and is ethically all-important. Dr. Tennant is strong in his biological bases. He judges other writers mercilessly [1] from a biological standpoint, and, if they go beyond naturalism, condemns them. His weakness surely appears when he has suddenly to desert his old standpoint, and makes appeal to 'intuition,' to a 'purified creationism,' to 'Lotze's Theism.' These more philosophical or more ethical positions are not harmonised with the author's biological prejudices. The different modes of thought lie side by side like fragments of distinct geological formations embedded in a mass of conglomerate. So far as it is a brute inheritance, sin is not sin. So far as sin is sinful ('exceeding sinful,' quotes Dr. Tennant), it is more than a brute inheritance. You find even perversions of instinct among lower animals; yet it remains man's special achievement to have invented taverns, opium dens, and houses of ill fame. These are no brute inheritance but things which mankind have added to God's world.

Or, again, one might argue thus. Brute inheritance is the raw material of all character, good and bad, and never is more than raw material. Even if we were not descended from merely animal forms of life, we have animalism as the basis of our spirituality. 'Hunger and love' are the foundations of all things. They may sink in human beings into greed and lust, or they may rise into all that is most loyal and most tender in human relationships. Brute inheritance explains too much and so explains nothing.

Or again; according to biological methods, everything

[1] Especially in *Origin and Propagation of Sin*. But one understands that he still holds to these positions.

is a brute inheritance—sin, conscience, religion. According to a sounder philosophy, reason transforms whatever it inherits from lower levels. Then goodness begins—and sin.

Leaving this popular evolutionary account of sin, we may turn back to Dr. Orr's rival yet kindred doctrine. Waiving the demurrer of Weismannism, we have still this to say from the standpoint of biology, that sin is not such a quality as biology can deal with. Following the lead of Darwin, we must regard the Nature which biology studies as interested in securing efficiency. And, following the lead of those who have modified the expression of Darwin's views, we note that the efficiency contemplated is that of the kind rather than the individual. Nature thinks in species ('So careful of the type she seems, So careless of the single life'), but also in families. Anything that promotes the production and safe rearing on the average of healthy offspring is premiated; anything that fails to do this—still more, anything that does the opposite—is penalised. Where St. Paul says that *the wages of sin is death*, biology affirms that the penalty of inefficiency is extinction. If sin is an acquired 'quality,' it ought to tend either to the improvement or to the deterioration of those affected, modifying their chances in the struggle. But it affects the whole species. And it has not led to human extinction, nor even arrested progress. Belonging *ex hypothesi* to the whole race, it cannot throw light upon the distinctive destiny of any part of mankind or of any individual.

There may be only too much reason to fear that history has its tests of extinction for the ineffective, and that the curve of human society may incline towards that grim penalty. At its lower end there is no such hint. Instinct is never master in human society, for reason well-nigh destroys every instinct strictly so-called; but through

long ages the kindred and only half-conscious forces of personal habit and tribal or national custom remain supreme. Enlightenment brings in new conditions. The fall of the birth-rate was the first great danger signal in ancient Rome. It is repeating itself to-day in modern France; and in the train of France all other modern nations are steadily following. Organised selfishness and systematic pleasure-seeking thrust aside the hereditary forces which have made the family strong with solemn joys and purifying sorrows. The handwriting on the wall seems clear. In former ages, when the older stocks were proving effete, unspoiled barbarian races took up the tasks of culture and the inheritance of faith. Where are such new races to be discovered to-day? Among the Aryan peoples, in the Slavs at most. If they in their turn tread the same dreary path, the white race must become a dwindling remnant, and the future will belong to the children of the black and the yellow women—till these too, perhaps, catch the disease. Vice and selfishness, selfishness and vice—that seems the end of 'civilisation' and 'progress.' A race that dooms itself to extinction is in the highest degree unfit. Biology must regard it as self-condemned.

There is no reason to hold that evolution, still less that Darwinism, guarantees progress in all the past and all the future. What undermines the persistence of the species destroys everything. Unfruitful indulgence of passion, under whatever conditions, signifies decadence, decay, and death. This, once more, is no brute inheritance. Environment may have extinguished innumerable species; perversion of instinct may be known in the animal world; but self-extinction by abuse of natural desire is one more characteristic human development. Ethically it may not be the greatest sin. Biologically it surely ranks as worst of all.

One does not present this view of the final social danger

as a hamartiology. It takes to do with the species considered as biological organisms, not with the individual considered as a personal spirit. At the most, it is a biological parable of the wages of sin, or a mere contribution to fuller and graver doctrines. The true tendency of sin and righteousness is not seen in extinction and survival but in the gain or forfeiture of peace with God. A race may not have reached such culminating wickedness as involves self-slaughter—some rain of fire and brimstone out of heaven until they are destroyed. Yet, though surviving, it may be very far removed from the demands of God's holy will. If there be a God, on whom our blessedness depends—if there be a hereafter, in which the exploited and finished past survives in endless significance—sin cannot be stated in biological categories. But we bring with us from our Old and New Testament sources these two great presuppositions for any worthy doctrine of sin—God, and immortality. Sin is sin against God and not merely against the laws of animal survival, though sometimes even these may penalise it. Sin is the deed of a being who is no mere passing representative of a species, but intrinsically worthy or unworthy. To gain fresh light for theology from Darwinism is a reasonable hope; to make Darwinism supreme and give it absolute authority is to treat man as if he were indeed a beast. More theologians have fallen into this error than one might at first suppose.

Moral evolution is brought before us by modern students in at least two distinct forms. We are pointed to it not merely in racial origins, but also as seen in the development of the individual child-life. According to the jargon of science, 'ontogeny' recapitulates 'phylogeny.' In the unborn and in the infant child there is a rapid recapitulation of stages through which the race has taken ages to pass. Once again, we are told, all is smooth evolution.

We see before our eyes the advance from a simply animal infancy to mature age with its responsibility, its interests, its sin. And where in this smooth process is there a break? The animal becomes human, determines the human; that is the whole truth of the matter.

There may be a difficulty for the moral judgment in the facts of moral inheritance. But the facts themselves are familiar. Evolutionary science makes no additions to them. Perhaps it gives them a new emphasis; if so, we may say that its contributions are made rather to the definition of our problems than to their solution. It will be part of our task in the chapters that follow to answer, if we may, the question—How can man be regarded as responsible?

CHAPTER XIII

SIN AND THE MORAL CONSCIOUSNESS

THE moral consciousness reveals itself in the history of human beings as the consciousness at first of a child, not a man. One smiles in reading Bishop Butler[1] at the manifest perplexity with which he faces the facts of infancy and youth. He would plainly have preferred a world in which souls stepped mature upon the stage of life, like Athene issuing from the forehead of Zeus. But, in point of fact, Butler only gives expression to a perplexity which every one who believes in responsibility must understand. Its most startling manifestation is Kant's or Julius Müller's doctrine of non-temporal self-determination towards evil.

On the other hand, we have Christ's testimony: 'Of such is the kingdom of God.' None of the epistles, none of the system-makers, could have reached to that thought. Jesus Christ was no sentimental *littérateur*, saying pretty things for their beauty. Responsibility, guilt, punishment, were thoughts with which he lived, amid which he died. Yet he saw in the artless and half-human child a prophecy of what man was to become when struggle had ended in victory and redemption was complete. To the insight of Jesus there is truer morality and godliness in a

[1] *E.g. Analogy*, Part II. chap. vi.: 'Creatures of moral natures or capacities, for a considerable part of that duration in which they are living agents, are not at all subjects of morality and religion.' On the other hand, no one has written more wisely on the benefits of infancy and education than Butler in Part I. chap. v.

society which includes children; in a life which begins in that strange nature-dream. Yet childhood is only a parable of the Christian character. We must pass through a wide compass of strange experiences. At the end, the God of our youth will be revealed as God of old age and death and the mysteries beyond. Like little children, but like in difference, we may pass to the fulness of our Father's kingdom.

In one of Mr. W. D. Howells's most poignant tales, a brilliant but drunken father, half rescued by the fault which made a cripple of his child, expresses the doubt whether even God does not 'save at the spigot and waste at the bung.' This terrible picture forces upon us a great problem. God does much for a life which the world is tarnishing when He entrusts to its care the mystery and glory of childhood. But what of the child? Ought not the heirs of the kingdom to have angel guardians rather than sin-stained human parents? Yet we must trust that here also God is truly wise. The family system must be best not only for parents but for children. We begin the knowledge of good and evil in the nursery. Even the worldly generally train children for goodness. While not yet fully responsible beings, we have our footsteps set in the paths of right-doing; and home yields to our faith the name of God as Father.

When we pass into manhood, the conditions are changed. We are now fully responsible, but our human environment is no longer bent upon training us for pure goodness. There is a law forbidding certain crimes. There is a public opinion defining a certain practicable standard of respectability. These we disregard at our peril. But 'law' in its proper and original sense has coarse meshes, and the standard of respectability is unexacting. So long as we do not defy these, the world goes on to praise worldly success and to recommend the pursuit of pleasure. There are but few higher voices. The world gives us our opportunity as responsible souls, but it sees that we are well tempted. If

we could fully fathom worldliness, we should understand a great deal about temptation and about sin.

True moral victory depends upon an inward goodness, which may be called the synthesis of childhood and worldly manhood. Once again we face the ideal of pure goodness, not now as children but as responsible adults; and the ideal has immensely deepened. Of course it must be understood that the ideal is not to be attained by the individual in isolation from society. The position which tempts him gives him his opportunity. His temptations themselves are discipline. But social goodness must be prolonged into a region where the individual fights his own battles, and gains—so far as human co-operation is concerned—his own victory.

In this inner life he meets with God. Potentially or with actual knowledge, and if so, then with 'fear and great joy,' we find as our associate in the inner life that Father God of whom childhood vaguely prophesied. By exception, unhappily, the morally earnest man may fail to recognise God. There may seem to be an unbroken soliloquy, as in the noble but icy maxims of Marcus Aurelius, or in kindred manifestations of more recent date. Yet, when it has reached true inwardness, morality is on the very verge of passing into religion. That is the natural fulfilment of its own proper movement. But, with the passage, what a transformation! Aspiration is no longer soliloquy but prayer. The moral life is now no lonely struggle; God is for us, and nothing can stand against us. I do not attempt here to say under what historical or spiritual conditions this reinterpretation takes place. But it comes in its wonderfulness, leaving all things what they were, yet changing all. We are still to obey conscience; we must still fight and overcome; but we are made more than conquerors through One that loved us.

We have been trying to describe the psychological evolution of conscience in the human individual. It has

its roots in the family and in society. Apart from these teachers, conscience might never exist. In its voice the dead or absent parent, the impersonal society, speaks—to praise us or to blame. But conscience is a living thing. It cannot be confined to echoing like a parrot what teachers or rulers have told us. They spoke to us with authority because in them too there was a living conscience. In morals, above all other regions, we must exclude the definition of education as a 'putting in'[1] from outside. Moral education is the awakening of a faculty of principles. There is a response from within. To use the biological language, which may best appeal to our very unphilosophical age—though such language is radically defective—what comes from without is a 'stimulus' merely. Morality has its own inward certainties. And, when morality passes into religion, the imaginary impartial spectator before whom we wince becomes the living and all-knowing God before whom we worship.

Sin comes to be recognised as we note our failures in the great task of inward loyalty; more definitely, of course, when we stand consciously in the presence of God. First in the home, then in society, man is trained as a doer of right or wrong; and he knows this. To such a being—not to an imaginary isolated saint or sinner; certainly not to a mere animal; as certainly not to a mere animal *plus* intellect—God speaks in the gospel. Even independently of the gospel man has inner life enough to know himself sinful; though apart from communion with God he will have a most inadequate estimate of sin.

It is peculiarly necessary to insist upon such elementary truths in an age like ours, when morality proper threatens to fade away and be lost in a world of phenomenal sequences. In *Middlemarch* we are told that the good people of that typical country town found 'there was no need to praise

[1] See above, p. 115. To speak frankly, I do not see how a consistent empiricism can fail to challenge the very bases of Christianity.

anybody for writing a book, since it was always done by somebody else.' The seemingly gentler, but equally cruel, opinion of to-day shrinks from admitting that any one is to be blamed for committing a sin, since 'somebody else' has always done it. In repudiating such a policy of contempt towards our race, one does not wish to ignore real perplexities, or to deny the share of blame due to the extravagances of past theology for the present recoil into hedonistic softness. Yet conscience forbids us to drift with the current of the hour, or to lull tempted souls into a deadly security.

Besides defending conscience, Christians are bound to defend the existence of free will in man. The same moral education which awakens a source of knowledge within us, commanding and forbidding, praising and blaming, also leads to the recognition of a power of personal choice. We have seen that Christian theology from Augustine downwards has implicated all its sternest theodicies with the recognition of freedom, at least in Adam. In itself, such theologising may be no better than a cruel evasion; yet the admission is profoundly significant.

There are two senses in which freedom of will may be affirmed. A lower freedom, freedom of choice, is specially called by Kant 'free will.'[1] The higher freedom, freedom from the sway of evil, Kant generally designates autonomy. The two reappear, in Julius Müller's more precise discussion of the special question now before us, as 'formal' and 'real' freedom. This pair of terms goes back to Hegel. With him it had a merely political reference, and served as an apology for Toryism. Well-governed Prussia enjoyed 'real freedom,' and had no need to envy the merely 'formal' freedom of constitutional England. The phraseology was borrowed in a sense of his own by Schelling,[2]

[1] Abbott points out that, in later editions of his ethical writings, Kant inclined to write *Willkür* for free choice. English readers cannot regard the suggestion as felicitous.

[2] On this obscure point Müller may be consulted.

from whom Müller took it over, simplifying it and using it for the more important ethical distinction. Its meaning now differs widely from Hegel's usage. It has passed from politics into ethics, and the terms from being rivals have become partners. We are done with the insinuation that, if we somehow capture real freedom, formal freedom may be neglected. Müller sees clearly that we need both. It is a great advance to have this made plain. Formal freedom without real might be called in Kantian phrase 'empty,' and real freedom without formal 'blind.'

> 'Our wills are ours, we know not how;
> Our wills are ours to make them Thine.'

Sin now defines itself not merely as disloyalty to the conscience but as abuse of free will. It abuses the formal prerogative of freedom; it exercises will not in the service of God and goodness but of self, or of momentary impulse, or of some lower good which, usurping a higher place than is due to it, must rank as evil.

We look then to moral experience as certifying to the mind that moral facts and forces are real, and that sin is evil. Many a learner in the school of moral experience may find it impossible to prove, perhaps even to define, personal identity; but experience makes each aware, with an inward personal knowledge, that it would be a lying evasion to pretend he is not the same person who committed his past actions, whether good or bad. There may be for him endless difficulty about the thought of immortality; but the moral argument, formulated or unformulated, will work in his mind, and he must recognise that the accident of death puts no term to human accountableness. Even if no future judgment were to be held on him, he would deserve to incur one. Again, he might not be able to give you a philosophy of conscience; and, if he compares his own most sacred convictions with those of others, he may

encounter perplexing discords; yet not such as to make him doubt that all minds are open to the ideal, are seeking after unity, and are in some true measure converging towards it. It might be a mere repetition of the last sentence in different terms if we spoke of common recognition of a *moral law*; the expression is in general use; it is sanctioned by Kant, borrowed even by Ritschl; it points to the recognition of principles. Yet the term has associations which might mislead, and it is very definitely rejected by St. Paul. Lastly, the plain moral person will be aware that he is no automaton. As he is bound by the truths which reveal themselves to conscience, so he is able to embody them in act. He is free from natural law, and must rise to freedom from caprice, since he is called in himself to the knowledge and love of what is good.

The last point may seem to create a difficulty for the religious mind. Is man, already stained with evil, really able to decide in favour of what is right? Absolutely startling expression is given to this postulate by a writer like Kant, who recognises radical evil in man, yet insists upon freedom in a way which sacrifices to it every possible affirmation of grace in God. Yet morality, and Christianity itself as the heir of the world's moral aspirations and hopes, cannot refuse to concur with the positive contents of Kant's statement. In some true sense, man, who is still a responsible being, is still free to choose life rather than death. One can recognise as morally conceivable what is suggested if not affirmed by Julius Müller—a condition of moral beings who, when the gospel draws near to them, become free to choose the good, but at all other times are helpless slaves of an evil into which each has freely sold himself. Such conditions, we say, are conceivable; but they are not those under which our conscience tells us that we live. Nor is any such state of literal deadness contemplated in the New Testament. We have already had occasion to note the emphatic

statements to the contrary found even in St. Paul, at Romans ii.

What relation shall ethical philosophy hold to the rudimentary truths just enumerated? The first business of such philosophy is to vindicate against doubt the immediate contents of the moral consciousness. Now, rival philosophies hold the field. It is not probable that they will ever be reduced to one; nor would Christianity act wisely by absolutely identifying its fortunes with any one school. We have to steer a careful course between naturalistic philosophies, which never permit ethics to come into being, and pantheising philosophies of the Absolute, which claim to transcend the contrast between right and wrong. Even if we should fail to formulate the ideally adequate ethics, Christianity may live in the recognition of moral facts. Even if we do attain to a noble and trustworthy philosophy, the facts of moral experience must continue to be our central light.

Another task for philosophy would be to define the contents of goodness, and—reading downwards into negative values—of sin. Different philosophies are in different degrees predisposed for this task. Intuitionalism and other philosophies of moral law recognise the right as a sum of separate requirements, and view wrongdoing chiefly as transgression or guilt. Naturalistic and empiricist philosophies define the right as personally pleasant, or as socially useful, or as both, and tend to identify sin with one great but limited field of its manifestation—the brute inheritance, chiefly of sensuality. Idealism defines goodness as self-realisation. In seeming contrast but perhaps in real harmony with this, Julius Müller defines sin as selfishness. If we must accept a definition of the contents of sin, we should prefer this one. Sin is a wrong assertion of the lower self, while virtue is the fulfilment of the better and higher. But a different view might be taken. It might be no mere paradox to contend that,

even if goodness can be summed up in a formula, sin cannot, being essentially anarchical and self-destructive; that Satan is verily divided against Satan, and that his kingdom must come to naught.

Is sin from the moral point of view universal? Dr. Tennant and Professor Wheeler Robinson, like Ritschl before them, have urged that we ought to treat the affirmation of universality as a generalisation rather than as a law—a thing found true in all the past, but not rigorously predictable. So far as morality is concerned, in contrast with the higher development which we call religion, this may be all that it is wise to say. In the next chapter we must inquire how religion regards the problem. Something no doubt will be gained for morality if we can establish that sinlessness is not to be regarded as an impossibility, or a sinless human being as a monster. On the other hand, even morality, if it cares to cast its eye over the facts, must report an uninterrupted prevalence of the sinful taint. All lives save One, in all ages, have more or less suffered from this blight. Ethics may chiefly regard wrongdoing as a thing of individual acts. Again, ethics may view sin as dominant in the wicked but subjugated by the good. It may have good grounds within its own region for this point of view. The highest teaching of all allows it. Jesus speaks in such terms. And yet perhaps in the long run not even morality could feel satisfied if it broke off here, and carried no further than this point its study of the tragedy of sin.

CHAPTER XIV

SIN AS UNIVERSAL

INTO the moral analysis of the thought of sin we now introduce, no longer tentatively but deliberately, the thought of God. We do not say, of gods; it is part of the task of religion, in its own light and from its own motives, independently of lessons from morality, to make the great advance to monotheism. At the thought of God then, great and one and good, there is a precipitation or crystallisation of ethical beliefs. They assume a new definiteness.

We may connect God with the conscience, whether conscience be viewed as a judge of the past or as a guide to the future. In either respect it gains immensely by ranking as God's voice. The authority of conscience becomes more plainly absolute. Whatever we do, we dare not transgress warnings which we have reason to regard as its real dictates. The wisdom revealed in our consciences is not absolute. It is partial, if growing. Conscience is but an imperfect viceroy of Him for whom it speaks. Yet it is invested with His own authority.

Still more significant changes are now set up in the thought of free will. Free as against nature, man is not and must not be free from God. In personal fellowship with God he is to find true freedom. Mystically, if we like to call it so, the religious man defies seemingly inevitable rational inferences. Viewed from the inside of experience, the personality of God and that of man are

not rivals, so that more given to the one implies less left for the other. Just because God is personal, we are—or we may grow to become—true persons. Again, just because God is personal, personality is revealed as the supreme category of the universe. A 'blessed truth' indeed, however the literary man may jeer and mock at the assertion. There may be difficulty in formulating the position, or in vindicating it by logic; but faith states it in a single phrase which ought to silence even the brilliant literary mocker, when it tells us that God is man's Father, that man is God's child. This is a new analysis of freedom, possible only in the light of God. And, if we cannot claim absolute power for the will any more than absolute wisdom for the conscience, yet, in this region as in the other, our finite and progressive attainments draw from God as their fountain and aspire to Him as their certain goal.

If this be true, it is dangerous error to teach that man's need of God is created for the first time by sin. Such a view is implied in a great deal of theologising; it is stated with unusual clearness in one of the essays of Rothe's *Zur Dogmatik*. According to Rothe, our religious consciousness because weakened by sin is unable to find God apart from His help. Surely dependence upon God is man's glory and not his shame. The present writer stated this long ago as a positive counterpart to the intolerable *Calvinistic Conception of Grace* [1]; and, although the position may seem to evade rather than solve the problems raised by sin, if it is a true position it cannot be irrelevant to our further study.

So far, however, we have contemplated God's relation to human goodness. Deep and dark problems—it may be, insoluble problems—await us as we pass on to speak of God's relation to moral evil.

The religious view of sin regards it as universal. It

[1] In *Essays Towards a New Theology* (1889).

finds the whole of mankind to be in need of redemption. And this view becomes a keen and immediate experience to any one who stands like Isaiah or Job in the presence of God, or like Simon Peter in the presence of Christ. Undoubtedly the divine nature makes exceedingly high demands upon us; but the love of God, whatever varied forms it takes, never compromises the requirements of holiness for our momentary convenience. God asks great things, but He gives the greatest of all. In His presence we know at once that we ought to be like Him, and that we are not. We are polluted; He is stainless white. This unearthly purity of the most high God has found embodiment upon earth in one life. Seeing Christ we see the Father. We know that divine perfection is not a mere imagination. It is a fact; it judges us and all men; it saves.

But a difficulty arises here. What if the utterances of the pious mind in the presence of God or Christ are rhetorical or poetical rather than logically exact? What if every finite and created spirit, standing before God, must pass through experiences not only of humiliation but of guilt? Does not the alleged religious experience prove too much? If a sense of guilt is inevitable when a creature stands before God, guilt ceases really to be guilt, and responsibility is lost. The Old Testament thought of the angels themselves as spotted with evil. Jesus Christ proclaims that *none is good save God*.

It is to be granted that devout reverence does not nicely distinguish the inferiority of creaturehood or of subordination to the sole fountain of purity from the guilt which creaturely weakness so easily incurs. The experience we are studying has part of its importance for our thought of God. No one to whom God has been revealed in moral and spiritual communion can think of Him as compromised by evil in any degree. The opposite becomes a moral postulate about God, as certain as the moral

postulates regarding man studied in our last chapter. Nor is it a postulate merely. It is an experience.

On its other side, the same experience reveals in our own case not mere finitude but sinful impurity. To assure ourselves that the same holds good regarding our fellows, we need a doctrine of connection with the race and of its evil plight. Here we come upon the thought of bondage, seemingly at least so contrasted with the ethical postulate of freedom. The race is sin-stained. Any individual member of the race, not holding a unique position within it as its Saviour and Lord, would be a mere anomaly if he were withdrawn from fellowship with it in sin. Some would explain this to-day by inheritance from brutes. But, as we saw, even the highest human quality has an animal basis; and, if there is any truth in responsibility and freedom, bad ethical qualities cannot be simply carried forward from pre-ethical stages. Others explain by descent from Adam, or from a hypothetical primitive generation of human beings analogous to the Adam and Eve of legend, who enjoyed and abused a real opportunity of rising to moral freedom and initiating a sinless development. But this seems too much to postulate. If it is possible, under the reign of God's justice and love, for later generations to find themselves under the ban, we cannot be sure that any generation was exempt from it. It would hardly alleviate the mystery of our position if Adam or his equivalent had historically enjoyed such an opportunity as might in itself seem ethically more normal.

We are safer in affirming that frequent choice of evil on the part of the race has dislocated its relation to God. Though communion with God is not abolished, it is indefinitely weakened. Romans i describes how mankind turned away from the knowledge of God which nature and conscience afforded; and this theoretical deduction is not without its confirmation in the modern study of the

history of religion. Andrew Lang and others report from many quarters high thoughts of God among low races—high thoughts, but possessing little efficacy. One would not make one's faith dependent on the vindication of this finding in Comparative Religion. Still it seems well established; and prejudice rather than any real counter-evidence may explain its rejection by those authorities who deny or ignore it. In any case the hypothesis illustrates what we mean by the human race turning away from God, and throwing into confusion the channels of intercourse with Him. True, it is not our relations with God alone that are disordered. Judged by any high ideal, man's relations with man are also dislocated. He wrongs his fellows and is wronged by them. This is another aspect of the central disturbance. Not truly loving our fellows, we cannot love God. Being wrong with Him, we cannot be right with them.

There are two senses in which men may be connected with each other in evil. We may inherit evil from the past. In that case, even our purblind vision can see that responsibility and guilt are proportionally lessened; and God, who is greater than we, will form the same judgment. But we may also conspire to encourage one another in wrongdoing; and such conspiracy, by human and divine law, is wickeder than private transgression. Now the history of mankind is full of the records of both types of connection in evil. Unfortunately theological thought, from the Second Commandment to the Synod of Dort, has given most of its attention to the wrong type. We have been taught to think of sin as an inheritance; but inheritance, if it does not exclude real guilt, at least seriously lessens responsibility. Even modern writers find it natural to speak of what 'man' did, as if they still believed in some colossal individual Adam who ruined the race. It might be safer if we habitually wrote, 'men' have done this or that evil.

Yet there remains the other element of guilty fellowship in an evil purpose. The generations overlap. Social heredity, as taught by Ritschl, is a wiser assertion than brutal or Adamic heredity, not simply because it lies within a truly moral region, but because it points to a combination of corporate wrongdoing with individual guilt. Evil custom descends, only because many free acts by individuals sanction and embody it. But it does, alas, descend! The world organises itself not on the devilish principle of conscious uttermost opposition to God, but on the principle of refusing all sacrifice for the good cause. If we rightly understand what we mean, we may truly say, not only sin is the deed of men, but of *man*.

In the presence of God, then, the evil state of the world is brought to consciousness. The confession runs, not merely 'I am unclean,' but 'I dwell in the midst of an unclean people.' Morality may prefer to say, All men hitherto have sinned; religion can hardly fail to affirm, All men are sinners. We do not seriously need to await with note-book and pencil registering the deeds of our children before we can ascertain whether they are to prove sin-stained or sinless. Religion affirms that sin is universal in the sense that all men share it. Again, it is universal because pervasive of the character. The question is more than one of individual bad actions contrasted with individual good ones.[1] Once more, sin is universal, because there is a real connection between the least and the gravest sin, or fault, or vice. We may rightly divide our fellows into the good and the bad. Yet it is never safe to place ourselves in the first class; and when we go deep enough we find there is one misery in which we are all sharers. And over against it stands one hope.[2]

[1] So perhaps at Ezekiel xviii.

[2] The old extravagant doctrine that all men are at the last stage of wickedness is fortunately dead to-day.

Some further dogmatic positions may be reviewed.

We shall do well to disencumber theology of the affirmation that physical death is due to sin. Against this the evidence of science seems decisive. Again, we shall do well to withdraw the assertion that all pain is punitive. Some unquestionably is, but assuredly some is not. Bushnell [1] has spoken of prehuman pain and death in the animal world as 'anticipative consequences' of man's transgressions. With no great nicety of logic, Bushnell claims that we meet with anticipative consequences every time a prison is built before the crimes are committed which are to fill it.[2]

If we must dogmatise on the creationist-traducianist issue, a new traducianism might be proposed—social, not physical. The soul or mind is drawn not merely from physical ancestors but from teachers living and dead. From past minds we inherit; from contemporaries we gain in the reciprocal communion of free actions. Nature and nurture, when we speak of mind or of morals, absolutely shade into each other. It has been well said that creationism stands for the immediate relation of each soul to God. That is a great truth. But surely immediacy may arise out of cancelled mediation. God who, says Butler, 'does not seem to do anything without means' need not produce human souls according to the school definition of a miracle, by an immediacy which rigidly excludes mediation; least of all surely when the creative act follows on the exercise of the function of sex.

On the other hand, we need not claim that this revised traducianism is ultimate metaphysical and moral truth.

We have now to compare the decision here reached,

[1] And I believe Secrétan also; Bushnell, in *Nature and the Supernatural.*

[2] A nearer parable is furnished by the lady who whipped her children every morning because they were sure to need whipping before night. We do not hear, however, that even this person completed her precautions by whipping the cat and dog.

that human sin is universal, with the findings of our last chapter, where we held that according to the moral consciousness sin is the guilty, because free, choice of individuals. If we cannot fully harmonise the two positions, we must define the difference between them and seek to limit it as far as we may.

Upon certain hypotheses our difficulty would vanish. First, if we could believe in a divine covenant immediately imputing the sin of Adam to his offspring. Then, by means of a legal fiction, we should entirely harmonise the moral postulate of freedom (in Adam) with the religious postulate of universal guilt. Again, Julius Müller's doctrine of a non-temporal fall meets all the demands of justice, though it is discredited by lack of evidence, and by the manifest difficulty of adjusting the strange doctrine to the facts of racial sin. The same criticism might be passed upon a doctrine whose revival is threatened to-day—that of reincarnation.[1]

It has also been claimed that the Brute-Inheritance theory relieves the difficulty. One would be inclined to rejoin that the theory fails to formulate and even to comprehend the true moral problem. Its proper affinities are with determinism—a belief which involves the wholesale destruction of morality and Christianity.

The Brute-Inheritance theory appears in a modified shape when Dr. Tennant associates it with libertarianism, pronounces for a real chance of sinless development, and explains its non-arrival by the 'exceeding difficulty' of the task. One is glad to find Dr. Tennant adhering to his libertarianism [2] and emphasising his positive beliefs more than he had done in his earlier writings. But one doubts his logic. When Origen talked of a fall of souls,

[1] Dr. Orr's reduction of orthodoxy to a doctrine of inherited corruption does not face the conditions of our present problem. It might be morally helpful to believe that Adam enjoyed a genuine chance. But no light would be thrown thereby upon present human helplessness.

[2] In *The Concept of Sin* (1912).

he knew of at least One that stood—the human soul of Jesus. When Julius Müller put forward a kindred view, he knew of many souls that overcame, although (Scripture convinces him) they must be pursuing their careers out of touch with us in some happier world than this. Logically possible, practically hopeless—does not Dr. Tennant's position recall the Calvinistic doctrine of a light which damned the heathen but could not save them? Shall we ever achieve much with a theodicy like that?

A bolder speculative theory (under the influence of Hegel [1]), according to which sin ranks as necessary, is found in Richard Rothe's *Theological Ethics*. It might be well if evolutionary theologians studied such handlings of positions very similar to their own. On the one hand, Rothe treated sin as a necessary stage for man; on the other hand as imputable to him—it was his own guilt. Such a position seems to land us very near indeed to self-contradiction. And we have no information that would warrant us in declaring that human development necessarily passes through sin. Rather would morality suggest that sin is evitable. Rothe further complicates the position by telling us that the normal development of human nature is seen in the sinless Jesus. His theosophical [2] system may lend itself to such intricacies. No one is likely to adopt this theosophy who desires to treat moral things morally and spiritual things spiritually.

Dr. Peake has expressed sympathy with Dr. Tennant's work, but his own positions are reached along different lines. He is an expounder of St. Paul's doctrine of the flesh, which he seems to accept as signifying that in the long run temptation will prove too much for any weak human soul. This painfully resembles a suggestion that sin is inevitable to finite mind as such. The perplexities of our doctrine are serious at the best; but we should

[1] And, it is said, of Daub.
[2] Rothe uses the term, and others might have selected it as characteristic.

be adding needlessly to our burdens if we made ourselves responsible for any such sweeping affirmation.

If we are unable to accept these alleged solutions, we have to admit the presence in our doctrine of an element of abiding perplexity. Still, there is no need to exaggerate. It may seem scarcely consonant with freedom that an element of guilt should be found in every human life, and that this guilt should imply nothing less than an undivided share in the guilt of the whole world. On the other hand we do not affirm, nor do we believe, that any one is guilty previously to the exercise of personal choice. A guilty infant is a contradiction in terms. We do not believe that any individual act of sin is forced by circumstances or by heredity upon a reluctant will. We do not doubt that it is in the power of every will to make the grand choice, habitually and predominantly, of good against evil. Such a choice is possible to all, easy to none. If there is an imperious moral claim on one side—the claim of freedom—there is an unquestionable moral fact on the other side; the fact of the world's sin. One still acts in obedience to a moral motive, in declining to recognise any soul as able to cut loose from fellowship with mankind in this great burden and bondage.

It has been proposed to treat the apparently irreconcilable pair of assertions about guilt as one instance of antinomy, *i.e.* of a kind of recognised or normal abnormality in human thought. Let us examine this.

The word comes to us from Kant, who believes that the speculative reason falls helplessly into antinomies. Of the four which he names in that connection, one has special interest for us. It deals with the opposing assertions of the universality of causation[1] and of the freedom of human acts. When he advances to the practical reason, Kant attempts to solve puzzles which are insol-

[1] About Kant's motives for this we have spoken above, p. 119.

uble to mere speculation. As phenomena our acts, being events in time, are and must be wholly determined. As noumena we are free.

Recent opinion is inclined to put a much lower value upon uniform mechanical causation than Kant or the men of science would do. We are told by Dr. James Ward that laws of nature are mere averages, with a varying and significant psychical content behind them at each point, could we but reach to this reality. This amendment to the older doctrine is somewhat drastic. If it were possible to find with Mr. M'Dowall,[1] inspired by Bergson, gradual emergence of non-determinism in a previously determinate universe, as we rise in the scale of being through life to thought—that might be a happier solution than any bare antinomy, or than any external dualistic linking together of necessity and freedom; or even than satisfying the postulate of freedom by reducing the laws of nature to a superficial illusion.

A second antinomy, towards which—under that name or its equivalent—theologians have often inclined, confronts human free will not with natural law but with divine predestination. It is held that all men's deeds are self-caused, and yet all overruled by the will of God. This theory too is out of favour for the moment. Philosophy is giving us a reduced God, who does not by any means order the whole of the universe.[2]

As we have already indicated, the characteristic religious affirmation declares that God and man are partners in goodness; both of them free; though the glory belongs to God as fountain alike of goodness and of being. The relation of moral evil to God cannot but be a dark problem. Believing firmly that God *permits* evil things which He can neither initiate by His own act nor contemplate save

[1] *Evolution and the Need of Atonement*, chap. iii.

[2] Dr. Ward (*Realm of Ends*, p. 312) quotes from Hamilton (*Reid*, p. 975) a reference to 'antilogies'—evidently another name for 'antinomies'—and indicates that he is not disposed to admit the existence of any such things.

with horror, we may yet continue to believe that even the bad man's life is worked into God's great pattern. Wickedness is the most circuitous and infinitely the unhappiest fashion of doing service to God; but not even the wicked can evade those strong hands that have made and fashioned us all. We do not affirm this antinomy, if antinomy it is to be called, on the principles of a philosophy which loves to find seeming contraries true to fact in order that it may establish a general metaphysical theory. We affirm it because of our faith—faith in conscience and faith in God. The God in whom we believe—God of the Bible and of Christ—must be not less great than that. *All things are possible* to Him.

A third antinomy, within the doctrine of sin itself, might take the form of asserting that man is *both* bond *and* free. In a sense we have already accepted both statements; but it seems absolutely necessary that we should hold them in a fashion in which they are logically compatible. What affects our moral life so closely cannot be affirmed simply in a mystery. Or the proposed hamartiological antinomy may be reduced with Dr. Tennant [1] to universal guilt and individual responsibility. Müller had claimed that such an antinomy must arise if we would not accept his theory of pre-temporal probation and fall. It is a question of language whether the amount of perplexity to which we have confessed is or is not to be dignified with the label 'antinomy.' The expression might once again suggest a general philosophical doctrine of semi-scepticism. But once again, in asserting what we assert and believing as we believe, we are not guided by any such doctrine, but by moral experiences which verify themselves to the conscience. If there is a measure of perplexity, there is also light to walk by. We believe in man as free, and in God as just, strong, and good.

[1] Who thinks he escapes it in a fashion we have already criticised. For Müller's conditional antinomy, see *Doctrine of Sin*, tr. Urwick, ii. 410.

Such theology is no doubt 'a poor thing' compared with systems which drive away mystery into nooks where it lurks unnoticed; yet, for morally earnest men and Christian souls, a little light may be better than none. We do not believe in a God who 'sympathises'[1] with sinners in the sense of apologising to His creatures for the faults the latter have committed. Nor do we believe in a God who is a theological pedant, seeing only the evil, explaining away the good. He loves the faintest element of goodness visible in any man. He created, He nourishes, He leads to victory, moral effort and aspiration; He guards them against being shipwrecked by pride. He is grieved at heart by our pitiable weakness. But He will not gloss over the reality of an evil so heartless and profane as sin. Nor will He ignore the threads, invisible yet strong, which link our respectable peccadilloes to monstrosities of vice and crime. *The judgment of God is according to truth against them which do such things.*

[1] Pfleiderer, quoted by Dr. Orchard.

CHAPTER XV

DIFFERENTIATIONS OF SIN

FROM contemplating sin as universal we now turn again to study it as, even for the religious consciousness, graduated and quantified upon different systems. Scripture exhibits the one method of treatment no less than the other.

(1) We may first dwell upon the contrast between sinful acts and sinful habits. This contrast is broadened by dogmatic theology until it sets over against actions, which conscience primarily estimates and condemns, a sinful or depraved nature; until indeed it teaches that we helplessly inherit, and inherit by physical descent or its equivalent, a character diametrically opposed to all that is good. In other words, habit is treated as hereditary, and hereditary habit is held to involve personal guilt. Much of this is extravagant; though, if one tried to formulate a doctrine in detail, one might find oneself a second time confronted by insoluble or almost insoluble problems. For it would be a very shallow and atomistic view of sin which ignored the tendency of actions to pass into habits, of habits to assume fixity in the character. Amid all perplexities we must hold to our clues, that the racial evil we come to share is accepted by our own guilty acts, and that the God who condemns it offers us an unfeigned hope of escape, if we will have it. Yet we must also hold to admissions already made. What seeks to find entrance into each new life, always with some success and often with much, is an organised

system of compromise with sin, if not of deliberate willing service to it.

Arising out of the study of habitual (or original) sin, we have the problem of what theologians call, *a potiori*, concupiscence—a quasi-instinctive movement of desire towards evil things before the will has opportunity to speak. Following out their doctrine of original or inherited sin, the early Protestants taught that concupiscence was truly sinful and involved guilt. Roman Catholic theologians took their stand adroitly on the side of moral fairness. While they emphasised the hereditary *guilt* of Adam's first transgression, they held that in the transition from innocence to sin mankind lost supernatural gifts, but retained human nature whole and undamaged. Concupiscence was inherently human and was not guilty. We can only decide as we already indicated. Sin before the presence of will is not sin at all; but the racial sin in which, with our own guilty consent, we are entangled carries with it the marks of many separate transgressions, including transgressions by others. Quasi-instinctive movements of desire towards evil are facilitated and almost compelled by past wrongdoing. In the adult such movements cannot be free from guilt.

(2) Next, we may turn to distinctions drawn between different degrees of sin.

A great deal of Catholic theology has been built up on the contrast between sins which are mortal and others which are but venial. We have already seen that the sacrificial law of the Old Testament, though it provided propitiatory rites for certain actions plainly involving moral guilt, held out no hope to the deliberate or obstinate wrongdoer. We have also seen the revival of this view in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and its application to the sin of apostasy from Christ, the one great sacrifice; while in the New Testament generally, apart from St. Paul, we have observed the tendency to mark off sins of ignorance as

less guilty than others committed with a high hand. A certain dogmatic hardening takes place when the one class of sins is marked as mortal and the other as venial.

These contrasted terms do not always bear a fixed significance. The expression 'mortal' sin plainly goes back to a passage already dealt with—1 John v. 16. There mortal sin seems to be placed beyond the reach of a Christian brother's good offices, possibly even beyond the mercy of God. When early Christian 'enthusiasm' is relegated to heretical bodies, mortal sin comes to be defined by the great Church as sin which interrupts fellowship with God, while venial sin is guilty in a lesser degree—marked by heaven, blamed by God, but not involving interruption of friendly relations or loss of the divine peace. Protestant theology knows nothing of this distinction in its primitive enthusiastic sense, and in its later Catholic form rejects it outright. Every sin is defined as mortal, and therefore as hell-worthy. We have already indicated how we must regard the Protestant doctrine. If an act could exist which had no further evil tendencies or consequences, it might be called distinctively 'venial.' But where is such an act to be found in the moral life? Yet Protestant and Catholic theologies agree that some sins are worse than others; also, that mortal sin itself is pardonable by God and His Church. It might be possible to build upon these premises an assertion that mortal sin in an eminent sense occurs for the first time by deliberate rejection of the grace of God.

Another contrast between lesser and graver sins contrasts the sin of ignorance with sins against light. We have admitted the possibility that belief in guilty ignorance is inherited from pre-ethical days, when guilt was inferred from external misfortunes to the disregard of the teachings of conscience. But we cannot refuse to see in the phrase as generally used a serious moral thought. Our Lord's words on the Cross, recorded in St. Luke, point to

ignorance as a partial alleviation of guilt. We have also already noted [1] how portentous an emphasis the distinction receives from Ritschl. He gives himself into the hands of his enemies when he coquettes with the idea that ignorance *causes* sin. The Old Testament law as we know [2] had to treat 'ignorance' as almost a synonym for 'weakness,' when tracing back sins to it. Plainly, partial ignorance must involve a lessening of guilt. Plainly, absolute ignorance would mean absolute non-imputation. Accordingly the phrase, in spite of its high Biblical authority, needs very careful handling if it is not to mislead us. We must recognise all sins as committed against different degrees of light. The distinction ceases to be sharply qualitative. It becomes quantitative and gradual.

Closely akin to the last is the grouping which contrasts sins of weakness with wilful and deliberate wrongdoing. Possibly, though not certainly, the Priestly Code of the Old Testament means to refer to infirmity rather than ignorance as the exculpation or mitigation of venial sins. The writer must confess that, scanty as its Biblical authority may be, this has always seemed to him much the most hopeful formula for contrasting more and less in wrongdoing. It embodies an unmistakably real distinction. Yet even in this form the distinction when closely regarded is seen to be matter of degree, and moral continuity is made plain. There is no guilt apart from the will. When we are betrayed into acts of weakness, though the temptation may be treacherous, we are traitorous in yielding to it; and if we are honest with ourselves we may know this. At the other extreme weakness may seem to be lost in defiant sin. 'There are men, and truly they are not a few, who shamelessly avow, not their interest, but their mere will and pleasure, to be their law of life; and who, in open defiance of everything that is reasonable, will go on in a course of vicious extravagance,

[1] Chap. xi. p. 134. [2] Compare chap. iii. p. 42.

foreseeing, with no remorse and little fear, that it will be their temporal ruin; and some of them under the apprehension of the consequences of wickedness in another state.' Yet perhaps God, who is ready to pardon, discovers even there a burden of weakness and inward unhappiness.

(3) We turn next to consider different aspects of sin.

An important traditional distinction contrasts the *guilt* and *power* of sin. We might base this distinction upon the Epistle to the Romans, where chapters i-v are purely 'forensic,' and chapters vi-viii 'physical.' How to relate these two aspects is a knotty theological problem. Are they simply to be laid side by side? Is one (and if so, which?) to be made a favourite while the other is neglected? We must deal with these aspects of sin in our next two chapters.[1]

Sometimes one has heard an attempt made to recognise a third concurrent aspect in sin—its stain. There is fair Biblical authority for doing so. Defilement is first a magical or superstitious idea; then it is modified by standards of personal cleanliness; then the idea of true moral purity is introduced. Finally Christ declares that the only real purity is moral, and the only defilement sin. If guilt implies offence against the community, or in the last analysis against God, defilement is self-degradation. Not that it lacks a social reference. One defiled, ceremonially or morally, is one degraded in his own eyes, but also one from whom his neighbours would shrink if they knew his condition. Perhaps we might say that the language of religion here anticipates Kantian ethics, which mark sin as an offence against our own reason. We are once more on the frontier between a 'mere' morality and a morality which is religious. The premises

[1] Dr. W. E. Orchard simplifies the puzzle of sin by omitting any theory of guilt. That is destructive moral naturalism, appropriately if too gently censured by Professor Wheeler Robinson.

for a doctrine of defilement are all found within the moral consciousness. If we draw the inference—if we cry 'Wretched man that I am!'—can we stop there? Must we not also cry 'Who shall deliver me?'?

Defilement then, in its purely ethical sense, is a specially impressive reinterpretation of what is meant by guilt, with less clearness of reference to a judge or judges outside. Of the power or bondage of sin it does not seem to speak. Present cleanliness of behaviour does not remove past defilement. On the other hand, past defilement does not seem to necessitate repeated self-defilement in the present. Our age much needs to grasp the thought of defilement—the truth that sin is disgusting.

(4) A passage in the Epistle to Titus[1] gives a threefold distinction of moral and religious goodness. Reading downwards into negative values, we distinguish three corresponding sins. Christians must live 'soberly,' *i.e.* with self-control. The pagan interpretation of that ideal may be pitiably external, but to recognise it at all is to grasp a truth. Correspondingly, there are sins of insobriety. To speak more boldly but with not less warrant, sin is insobriety. If we call sin selfishness, let us not forget that sin is self-destruction too. It invites anarchy at the centre of the soul.

Next, Christians must live righteously. They must not fail to meet their neighbours' just claims. To fail to do so is to commit sins of injustice. Again speaking more boldly, but with equal warrant, we may say that sin is radical injustice. The modern mind inclines to hold that the Christian maxim of love is lacking here. But there need be no inconsistency. Love fulfils the law, and love alone. It, and it only, is incapable of doing harm. And it is important for the sentimental modern mind to realise that we are pledged to definite duties, and that capricious indulgence of generous preferences will not

[1] ii. 12.

suffice. Nor again is it left to the taste of the unfortunate to ask what they will, and call their demand 'justice.' We are all under law. Sin is indeed radically unloving; but because unloving it becomes unjust.

Thirdly, Christians are to live 'godly.' The characteristic of sinfulness is to injure God; some sins explicitly defy Him; and the tendency to such extreme wickedness is discoverable in all wrongdoing.

(5) Last of all, we may speak of three forms of evil grouped together as temptations in a well-known devotional phrase—the world, the flesh, and the devil.

It was observed above[1] that, if we could fathom worldliness, we should have learned a great deal in regard to sin. Worldliness is radically irreligious. It ignores God. It is not consciously and directly immoral; but it works with crude external standards of right and wrong, and cares little for any standard at all. John Foster[2] finds a sign of human depravity in the surprise we feel when we learn that any casual stranger is a godly man. The logic of the remark may seem doubtful; but we cannot deny Foster's fact, or its significance. 'There be few' who find the way of life. Public opinion takes its colour from the easy-going many, not from the unwelcomely rigorous few; and worldliness, as we know it, emerges. When it tries to be moral at all, its faults are first, conventionalism; secondly, a shallow and external convention.

On behalf of the Voluntary theory, which in its extreme form desires absolutely to sunder the state from religion, its great champion Vinet proposed to define the state as 'humanity minus conscience,' and as 'the collective natural man.' These are startling and ugly definitions for the state. No help for the policy of separating church and state can be expected from so libellous a definition of the civil community. As modern interpreters of the doctrine of the Kingdom of God have taught, the state

[1] Chapter XIII. pp. 149, 150. [2] I believe.

and the family are God's creation. To leave conscience out of politics would be impossible. But Vinet's definitions exactly fit that strange entity which religion calls 'the world.' We cannot localise the world in any external fellowship. It is the collective bad self. It is a spirit and an atmosphere. Essentially it is godless.

Worldly conventionality may be found in any quarter. There is an ecclesiastical worldliness. It appears in the church as often as living Christian goodness dies down; according to F. D. Maurice it is specially characteristic of what is called the 'religious' press. There may even be a convention of unconventionality. Bohemianism is not morality; it would be gross flattery to call the Bohemian unworldly. Speaking from a slender enough acquaintance with the modern theatre, the writer would be inclined to say that the stage is tyrannised over by the conventions of Bohemianism. The one sin it knows and dreads is respectability. Those who break with the narrowness of the respectable world become forthwith heroes, almost saints, perhaps martyrs. It needs no great acumen to recognise here one more mask for the protean spirit of worldliness. This stagy ethic rings hollow. It differs from the cant of the conventicle and from the noble sentiments of the old melodrama; but it is itself a cant of anti-cant and a convention of unconventionality.

Worldliness then is a tone of mind. It puts a vulgar interpretation upon success and happiness. It goes with the majority against the saints, and values cheap rewards while scoffing at the things of the inner life. It may seem by no means the worst of wrongdoings; there is more besides worldliness in racial sin; but it is ubiquitous in a sinful world, and its narcotic influences are capable of destroying all that is good.

'The flesh' in this classification refers to bodily seductions exclusively, *i.e.* to greed and to lust. If we like to say so, it is the brute 'inheritance'; but any animal

nature called to rationality and moral advance must find such temptations within itself. In human experience the 'world' and the 'flesh' multiply each other's powers for evil. There is no sin towards which the worldly convention is more tolerant than lust. Again, the flesh is very specially a temptation to insobriety.[1] Like St. Paul we might be willing to obliterate any distinction between worldliness and 'the mind of the flesh.' Yet, in strict propriety, and in the devotional phrase we are now studying, worldliness is marked out by the negative quality of godlessness. It would be a very shallow conception of sin that was satisfied to explain it by the urgency of animal conditions.

Diabolic temptations as well may be included in St. Paul's 'flesh.' And one trained under Calvinism knows well that a pronounced doctrine of original sin leaves little indeed to assign to a tempting spirit. The fountain of bitterness is recognised within our own hearts; as Christ Himself taught. But what are these diabolical temptations? It is possible to hold that they proceed from actual evil spirits; yet no dogmatic importance belongs to this possibility. We can watch the rise of the doctrine of Satan in the Old Testament. Perhaps it is borrowed from abroad. Perhaps it develops from germs native to the religion of Israel. Perhaps it is a mixture of the two. In any case the faith of the Old Testament existed before there was belief in Satan, and the faith of the New Testament will remain even if such belief vanishes. Our Lord seems to sanction the belief; but a doctrine of God as Father on the one side, and a doctrine of sin as coming from within man upon the other side, leave no distinctive place in religious thought for the Enemy. Even if such a being exists, recognition of that fact belongs to a very different category from faith in God. True religious faith does not barely recognise God's existence; it re-

[1] But self-control must also repress cowardice.

joices in Him, and trusts in Him with the whole heart. Belief in Satan could be no more than a scientific hypothesis.

It is that at the most; at the least and worst, what is it? Perhaps a dark superstition; perhaps a metaphor wrongly hardened into a dogma. Modern psychology shows us depths upon depths within ourselves which we cannot fathom. There are hidden aspirations towards God within the worst; there are sudden movements—nay, strong rushes—towards evil within the best. It would be Sadducean to deny the possible existence of spirit tempters. If we may be, and are, tempted by embodied spirits stained with sin, members of the human race, why should it be deemed incredible that other spirits, of a different order, may be suffered by God and invited by thoughtless sinners to tempt and try the children of men?

The moral psychology of a spirit of evil might raise difficulties. It is no doubt true, as modern writers repeat over and over, that man seeks evil because he considers it good. Yes; but what are those things that we call good? What does wilful lust call a good thing? *The expense of spirit in a waste of shame*, with heartless destruction of its tools. What does hatred call a good thing? What possibilities are contained in the fuller development of enmity against God? When we consciously yield to sin, a process begins which has its limit in a spiritual state incapable of repentance. There might be spirits in contact with us by whom such a state had already been reached. No man can prove this impossible.

Again, the metaphysics of the Prince of the devils might require careful scrutiny. Such a being could not be recognised in dualistic fashion as an anti-God—an omnipotent or almost omnipotent power wedded to evil. At most, Satan must be for our thoughts analogous to some of the modern minimising constructions of deity—

strong but not omnipotent; *primus inter pares* but not isolated; the present [1] perhaps rather than the permanent head of the forces that fight against God.

At the same time, these could not be more than possibilities, and they are devoid of true religious importance even if they were established as facts. What it abidingly concerns us to know is that Satanic impulses—pride, hatred, other wanton forms of evil—find an attachment within our hearts. These things attract us; whatever their source (or rather their occasion) they rise up from the depths of our being and look us in the face. They are our self indeed; but what a self! Let no one be blinded by the would-be-scientific pedantry which tells us that nothing very bad can overtake us. Rather may anything and everything happen; as surely as if all the myriads of unclean spirits which mediæval fancy pictured were closing round us and bending their whole forces on our destruction. Rather will anything and everything evil have its place, stage after stage, in the drama of our ruin; unless we turn from self-trust and self-excuse to God, and to Him in whom God is revealed as our redeemer.

Diabolical sin, then, is the last and worst stage in evil, amply possible psychologically whether or not there is a personal president of the kingdom of evil; the natural outgrowth and fulfilment of the potencies of everyday sin.

[1] Compare Rothe once more.

CHAPTER XVI

THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS

We have for several chapters been contemplating the unrelieved darkness of sin, as it tends to ripen into utter moral death. We turn now to the hope there is for us in God. 'Iniquity' need not be 'our ruin.' Many a discussion of the problem of sin represents its darker issues as natural and almost necessary, while salvation ranks not merely as supernatural but almost as abnormal. Yet it is important that we should realise how often in the history of a sinful soul opportunities arise for the forces of healing and rescue. Such forces certainly belong to a higher moral plane than that dismal region in which sin reigns unto death. In so far, they may well be called supernatural. But it is dogmatism rather than true reverence which would refuse to admit that the nature God has given us, even in the form in which it becomes ours amid a tainted society, contains the possibilities of recovery. That is truth; though we do not affirm it to be the whole truth.

First of all, before proceeding to speak explicitly of forgiveness, we must briefly discuss the nature and meaning of repentance. We have seen how conspicuous the call to repentance is in Scripture—in the great prophets of the Old Testament, in the Baptist, in our Lord Himself; although the term retreats behind others in the Pauline teaching, and is significantly absent from the Johannine.

Human souls are constituted for repentance. It has been made possible that, when they have incurred the stain of sin, they should react against their past with self-condemnation and the purpose of a better future. It is not Scripture, nor is it experience, which will lead us to ignore this fact—a fact which is a gospel in itself, though lower than the full gospel of the grace of God.

If we are to speak of free will as operating among sinful men, here is where it best shows itself. To be free is to repent and to repent is to be free. While there is hope of repentance there is a chance of freedom; though we should mislead ourselves if we joined the light-minded band who treat the bare unanalysed possibility of repentance as a guarantee that all must go well. On the other hand, those philosophies which blot out free will are found consistently sneering at repentance. According to Cotter Morison's violent book,[1] it is 'a waste of time.' According to the gloomy genius of Spinoza, 'He who repents of any deed he has done is twice miserable or impotent.'[2] He 'first suffers himself to be overcome by base desire, and is next subdued by sorrow.' Nothing could be more characteristic, or more false. Not surely a waste of time, but time best spent; time which by God's mercy may retrieve the most lamentable moral waste of the past.

Accordingly this sacred thing has two faces. One looking backward is full of sorrow, but one looking forward of hope. When the writer has tried to expound Luke xv from the pulpit, he has been told of criticism by an aggressively modernist hearer[3] to this effect: that the preacher insisted upon the old-fashioned view of repentance as sorrow, whereas the 'modern' view treats it as reformation. Why oppose the two? Why cut the pair of scissors into halves under the pretence that it will

[1] *The Service of Man.* [2] *Ethics*, part IV., proposition liv.
[3] A good man; since fallen asleep.

do better work? Surely there is no mystery in the matter. If we intend a better future, we cannot but lament the bad past. If we truly regret the past, we have strong motives for doing better hereafter. But, if we tread out the spark of divine sorrow in our consciences, what can be expected but that the future will repeat the old dreary history in ever worse forms?

Something similar to the above criticism on repentance, as once imperfectly preached, stands printed in the introduction to Horace Bushnell's *Forgiveness and Law*. Bushnell blames M'Leod Campbell's emphasis upon 'equivalent sorrow for sin,' because it seems 'as if the superstitious ideas of penance had disfigured a little his conception of the wholly joyful and free nature of repentance.' I do not defend everything Campbell has written on the point.[1] One fears that Campbell was misled into thoughts or at least phrases of quantitative equivalence, in a region where such reckoning is meaningless. Yet Bushnell's statement impresses one as painfully jaunty. Repentance is not repentance if he dances along whistling a gay tune and asking all the world to admire him for a fine fellow. *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit.*[2]

It is true, of course, that we are not to work up a fictitious sorrow, as if that were a compensation to God or conscience for our sins. No answer can be given to the question, How much should I grieve? or, How long am I to be in heaviness? Like many other duties (*e.g.* of

[1] Still less the more ecclesiastical development of similar thoughts in Moberly's *Atonement and Personality*.

[2] I may take this opportunity of explaining what I meant in 1889 by calling Bushnell's construction of the Atonement *parum ad rem*; a phrase for which, when a young and struggling man, I was soundly scolded by the late Dr. A. B. Bruce in the *Theological*. I thought Bushnell had discredited himself by the number of essays on divergent lines which he printed (like Mr. Joseph Chamberlain's successive projects for minimal Home Rule), each, as the railway companies say, 'cancelling all previous bills.' More particularly I thought his *Threefold Doctrine of Christ concerning Himself*, chap. iv in *Forgiveness and Law*, an excellent Christian sermon, but not really relevant to a doctrine of atonement. And that judgment I can only reaffirm.

'sobriety'), the duty of repentance evades quantitative determination, above all by an outsider. Yet in every such case obligation stands. And those who are in a hurry to forgive themselves, and who find the valley of humiliation unendurable, have reason to fear that they are hurrying away from God.

Repentance, then, does great things for sinful men. If you like, it is a standing miracle. But can the repentance we have thus described come to the birth without further conditions? Can it arise within the limits of a single personality? To say the least, it is incomparably more likely to arise with help from outside. First, there is the child's repentance, when the righteousness and grieved love of a parent, or of some other occupying a parent's place and doing a parent's part, lead the little one out from the power of its waywardness into healing sorrow. Next, there may be the neighbour whom we personally have wronged. Our duty is to make confession to him. It is his part to forgive. And in giving that assurance he approximately represents God Himself, and may be divinely helpful to us. Nay, even if he proves bitter and narrow, the duty of confession must still be discharged with all meekness by one 'buffeted for his faults.' If the other is throwing away his opportunity, we, his moral inferiors in the past, must not be guilty of a new folly. Confession under such circumstances will be doubly painful, yet it may be a healing sacrament. Once again, there may be 'those who are spiritual,' who 'save a soul from death' by bringing it to repentance. Or, better still, we may discover God as imperfectly but really represented in these various media. Supremest of all, it may be our happiness and eternal life to know God perfectly represented to us in the Lord Jesus.

Thus the study of repentance almost of itself forces us to study forgiveness. In this there are at least two moral personalities; one as wrongdoer, one as healer.

Forgiveness is traditionally interpreted as remission of penalties. In that interpretation we recognise the legalist assumptions. When Claus Harms included among his modern theses the striking warning, 'Conscience cannot forgive a single sin,' he too, perhaps, forgot or ignored repentance. We have granted that repentance may scarcely be possible without help from some one outside us, some one temporarily or permanently above us; yet, when it comes to pass, we know in our consciences that peace is possible, and forgiveness no mirage but a sure word from God.

To define forgiveness in terms of law is to identify it with pardon, *i.e.* with the remission of external penalties.[1] Under English law, when it is found that by a miscarriage of justice an innocent man has been imprisoned, the only constitutional way of releasing him is to pardon him. The sentence which was legally binding becomes legally void. It would now be criminal to detain him. But, whatever analogy there may be between forgiveness and such a pardon, the differences are surely great. Inherently, forgiveness is a matter of personal relationship. To forgive any one is to restore him to his place in our confidence. One says in effect, 'It shall be, so far as I am concerned, as if the fault had never been committed at all.' When God says that to us, how great a thing He says! We also must say nothing less when, perhaps after punishing, we forgive a child, or when we forgive any other penitent wrongdoer.

Accordingly we weaken the thought of forgiveness if we make it merely an amicable disposition towards the wrongdoer. Of course we are always bound in duty to possess a forgiving heart. And what is our duty here is also inevitably our privilege. No longer shall we eat our hearts away in spitefulness. We must not, because

[1] There must have been sentence, I take it, before pardon is thinkable. To drop a prosecution is not to pardon.

of any personal wrongs, wish that the offender may experience evil, but rather the highest moral good. Still, the act of forgiveness is something beyond a general temper of forgivingness. It is not possible apart from moral conditions. I cannot readmit to intimacy the false or foolish friend who betrayed my confidence unless I have good reason to hope that he has learned a lesson. Certainty of course is impossible, and it would be wicked pedantry to require it; but there must be hope. Not arbitrarily but by moral necessity forgiveness implies repentance; else it would sink into weak indulgence or guilty connivance. Whatever we do, we must not tempt the wrongdoer to repeat his fault. True forgiveness is a higher thing than that. When it arises out of moral circumstance without and moral struggle within, it is one of God's saving ministries.

Morbidly cautious theologians may of course question whether it is safe to explain divine forgiveness along these human lines. Can the moral Governor of the Universe blot out the past? We need not affirm that there are no differences between God's forgiveness and ours, though it would need great care to define where the difference lies. But, if there is difference, there is resemblance too. And the teaching of Christ a hundred times over encourages us to trust the resemblance and waive the difference. It is not Christ who will ever tell us that forgiveness is impossible in God's world except by some moral artifice or prodigy. We do not come to God's forgiveness as to a strange thing. We climb up to the interpretation of its meaning by human experience of what it is to forgive and to be forgiven. Beyond using the great name Father, with all that it implies concerning God, Jesus says little or nothing about fatherly forgiveness; but all the more about brotherly.

The pre-requisite to forgiveness is confession (Ps. xxxii. 5; 1 Jn. i. 9). As Campbell warns us, no dogmatic supplement must be brought in from the theology of Atonement

to disturb the symmetrical perfection of an appeal to God's loving-kindness. The thought is self-complete. It is impossible to forgive without repentance; it is morally impossible not to forgive when sincere confession is made.[1] On the other hand, confession is all. It is not that we need, but that we *can* do no more. The man who tries to strike a balance between his good and his evil deeds, and to establish a majority on the right side, is a stranger to himself and to God.[2]

Of course repentance will make amends so far as it can. But the opportunity may not be allowed it. It is a rare happiness to be permitted such a privilege; and even then the wrong is not effaced. Perhaps we do not truly know what repentance means, about which some talk so glibly, till we share the punishment of Esau, who 'found no place of repentance,' his action being beyond recall. But God be thanked that when our evil acts are visibly and notoriously what all evil is in essence, irremediable—God be thanked that even then forgiveness remains with Him. Amid appalling mysteries, that is certain; or the gospel mocks us. There is mercy for the seducer. There is mercy for the murderer. In one word which says everything, there is mercy for the sinner.[3]

[1] It would be false logic to say that the repentant man who confesses his fault has *the right* to be forgiven. Even on earth, while it is my duty to forgive a repentant brother, it would be sophistical to say that he as an individual can claim forgiveness by right.

[2] Such passages as Prov. xvi. 6 and Dan. iv. 27 cannot be given dogmatic authority by Christians.

The writer can remember, as a child, puzzling over Bulwer Lytton's teaching about making amends, in *The Caxtons*; vaguely feeling that something was wrong, but of course not consulting a senior. Perplexed children will scarcely be found doing the latter; certainly not the children of an age of repression.

[3] The great Pauline epistles speak of justification. Those of the Captivity fall into line with general usage in speaking of forgiveness. It is right to observe these differences, even if we do not draw the inferences of the radical critics.

In sense, there is probably no difference at all. Nothing can be hollower than the contrast school-Protestantism draws between negative 'forgiveness' and positive 'acceptance.' They are inseparable; very plainly indeed so, for St. Paul.

We might suggest then, as the true relation between repentance and forgiveness, that they are the same spiritual process viewed from different directions; much like the inside and outside of a single curve. It is possible to treat repentance (say rather, confession) as the condition of forgiveness. Again, it is possible to contend that forgiveness must be experienced before we repent. But the full truth differs from either. Repentance implies forgiveness as its correlate. Sometimes the correlate is lacking in man. All the more certainly shall we find it in God.

There is one thing still to note about forgiveness, under that name. It will not do to assume with vulgar legalism that sin is an isolated interruption of generally good relations with heaven, calling only for particular acts of repentance, and needing no more than certain limited assurances of forgiveness. What the prophets worked out regarding pervasive sin and repentance is reaffirmed by Christ and the apostles. There is the mark of sin everywhere. Our whole life must be a repentance—with all of solemnity that belongs to that experience, but also with all its twice-born hope. Vital religion began for us in the forgiving mercy of God. It can end nowhere else.

We have not yet exhausted the merest rudiments of the subject of forgiveness, so long as we have not made some reference of a positive kind to the doctrine of Atonement. In a short treatise on sin it would be useless to try to say much on the great theme. But it might be still more improper to maintain unbroken silence.

Old Testament prophets thought but little of sin-offerings. They speak much of hope in God even for sinful Israel, but never point the penitent to animal sacrifices. Nor do the psalms of repentance think of any such helps. There is a partial or seeming exception to this silence of the Old Testament when the Deutero-Isaiah, or, as some would

hold, the earlier singer whose work he incorporates, speaks of a great sufferer making his soul a guilt-offering. That sacrifice is spiritual. We hear or half hear of it once, and once only.

What the Old Testament could not discover, the New Testament claims to have found as a fact. There had appeared among men One who offered what His followers recognised as a real sacrifice, really availing to cleanse the conscience. The men of the New Testament were as fully aware as Old Testament prophets had been that ritual was irrelevant to our deeper needs. A better sacrifice, not less spiritual than the word of forgiveness itself, had been offered in the life, and still more the death, of Jesus Christ. This sacrifice resembles the Covenant Sacrifice of Exodus xxv in that it initiates a new and permanent relation to God. It resembles the sin-offerings of the law in that it is presented and accepted on behalf of those who, to their own consciousness and to the consciousness of God and the Redeemer, are guilty. Hence it initiates that most golden of golden ages, in which God remembers sin no more.

The work of Christ is described as a sacrifice; but what is the permanent significance of that description to us? Much is covered by the fact that we receive from Christ the assurance of forgiveness. If we have a living sense of the truth that sin is sinful and that redemption is wonderful, and if we trust ourselves to the promises of Christ, it may be that we are laying hold of the deepest and most central truths in the Christian atonement. While forgiveness is not indeed the whole of the Gospel, it is a point of view complete in itself; and those who speak of 'mere forgiveness' might almost as well say 'only God.' Some would seem to think that God resembles a physical force working uniformly. The friendship of such a being could not be forfeited—nor yet really enjoyed. There is no place in such modes of thought for forgive-

ness or for atonement. Is there really any place in them for God? Are such ways of thinking Christian?

Difficult as the thought of Christ's sacrifice may be to modern minds, they find even greater difficulty in confessing that Christ is a propitiation with God. Certainly we must never speak as if Jesus overbore reluctance in that Father who Himself sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. That God is propitious *in Christ* means that the world's sin is a unity; that there is a difference in God's sight between sin and righteousness; and again between sin confessed and forsaken on one side, and deliberate wrong-doing on the other.

According to Ritschl, Christ is the great Head of the community of the saved, but not truly a propitiation. His mercy avails for little sins which hardly need an atonement, but obdurate sins are beyond hope. Surely this is the most dreary of all gospels that ever theology invented. Against it one would wish to appeal like St. Paul to a moral postulate. Perhaps our postulate is nowhere found in his writings; nor can an obscure modern claim the authority of an apostle—and such an apostle! But, if we have found a genuine moral and spiritual postulate, it needs no confirmation. We postulate then that *Atonement covers the greatest possible sins.* Against the language—hardly against the thought—of M'Leod Campbell himself, one might use his own quotation from Luther: 'Learn here of Paul to believe that Christ was given not for feigned or counterfeit sins, nor yet for small sins, but for great and large sins; not for one or two, but for all; not for vanquished sins (for no man, no, nor angel, is able to subdue the least sin that is) but for invincible sins.' Whatever contributions Ritschl has made elsewhere to theology—and they are great; whatever value should be attached to his favourite distinction between sins of ignorance and obdurate or wilful sin; he is utterly wrong in calling this distinction 'so important for the doctrine of

atonement.'[1] In that region its value is precisely zero. There is no appeal to God in the light of the smallness of our sins. 'Pardon mine iniquity, *for it is great*.'

Surely we can see that it is morally unthinkable the sinner should atone for himself.[2] It is true, according to conscience and according to Scripture, that men can choose life rather than death. It is true that God will judge every soul according to his works. But, if we take cognisance of sin at all as sin against God, no hope is left for us except in God's mercy. Repentance, not innocence; confession, not expiation by deeds or sufferings of our own—there must our hope lie.

We have seen the remedial forces at work within a single consciousness, where they appear as repentance. We have seen them more fully elucidated and interpreted when there are two consciousnesses and personalities before us—the offender who is forgiven; the other, human or divine, who forgives. Consistently with these basal truths, the Christian gospel adds a further interpretation. It tells us that a third personality has graciously entered into the fellowship of our evil state. We are no longer alone with our sorrow, nor even alone with our sorrow and our God, when *the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin*.

[1] *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, ii. p. 243, note.

[2] Hence there is immorality and irreligion even in the attenuated forms in which Catholic theology recognises penances and the like.

CHAPTER XVII

THE CONQUEST OF SIN

Two distinct problems arise for any soteriology: how does redemption deal with the 'guilt' and how with the 'power' of sin? The orthodox Protestant tradition loves to name the two problems that of 'justification' and that of 'sanctification'[1] respectively. It insists that the two must be kept separate. Its motive is good. It fears lest the miracle of a sinner's peace with God be lost if his standing in grace be made to depend in any degree upon his own performance. The favourite apostle of Protestantism is thought to set an example of this system of water-tight compartments; and again, of placing justification foremost. But surely, if it is necessary to distinguish different aspects of truth, it is also necessary to relate them to each other. Even in St. Paul one doubts whether the isolation of successive trains of thought is quite satisfactory; under popular Protestantism the procedure constantly threatens to involve the sacrifice of morality.

Others describe the contrasted doctrines as dealing with Reconciliation and with Redemption. Schleiermacher makes redemption central—deliverance from the actual reign of evil—and implies that it carries reconciliation with it. Ritschl inverts this view. He makes recon-

[1] In the Bible to sanctify means to consecrate. It is therefore almost a synonym for to justify. Yet theologians down to Schleiermacher (inclusive) use sanctification for renewal. We must not make too much of such linguistic points; but we cannot ignore them.

ciliation primary, as conveying the religious blessing of peace with God. In this way he reaches his characteristic version of reduced or modified Paulinism. Here Schleiermacher's thinking appears the more modernist, Ritschl's—with the qualification named—the more evangelical. M'Leod Campbell reveals an emphasis like Schleiermacher's on what he calls the 'prospective' aspect of Atonement, if we are right in identifying that aspect with eternal life as a present moral possession, and the latter again with renewal. Yet Campbell insists upon having a place for the 'retrospective.' He believes profoundly in the guilt of sin.

At the present day most minds are of the modern type. If one can believe in God at all, one finds oneself in possession of a God who forgives. It may truly be a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God; but the vision which haunts us in our darker hours is something still more appalling—not a vision of angry divine hands, but of a dreary void with no hand in it either to punish or to help. We need not boast of our turn of mind. In some ways it may be better than our fathers' psychological climate; in other respects it is no doubt worse. But it is a fact which we cannot ignore or evade, though it need not blind us to higher truths. We may learn how great a thing God's forgiveness is, how great a thing Christ's sacrifice. At the same time we must go to our neighbours, telling them that the gospel is not one-sidedly confined to confirming thoughts of pardon or to relieving fears of punishment. The gospel includes a message of renewal and a proclamation of the conquest of sin.[1] The modern mind, unless it be intoxicated and maddened with its modernism, has its own special appeal from Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

The traditional theory in Protestant theology tells us

[1] This phrase, however, is not biblical.

that, when law has been satisfied by the substitutionary penalties endured by Christ, Divine omnipotence can flow forth again to make the redeemed 'holy.' Or, to much the same effect, we are told that specific acts of energy proceeding through the Holy Spirit from the glorified Christ constitute the difference between sinfulness and graciousness. There is more perhaps of novelty in the appeal to Christ's *merit* as distinct from His substitutionary sufferings. His merit is thought to guarantee that henceforth Divine omnipotence not only may but must fulfil its healing task. Yet probably this seeming improvement in the scheme suffers from incoherence. Traditional theology thinks in terms of law; but law and merit have nothing to say to each other. Again, theology is interested in showing that Christ, and the supreme manifestation of His grace in His death, were *necessary* to human redemption. But could it be necessary that Christ should merit redemption for us? Such a position would seem to imply that God had no personal goodwill for the race until the Son extorted it from Him.

Let us ask, then, whether the simple appeal to Divine omnipotence is a sufficient Christian doctrine of renewal. Is it not the case that all positive knowledge of God deals with other attributes? We confess His boundless power; but our faith thinks of His power and grace as working according to a revealed rule and travelling along predetermined channels. Theology could have no existence unless this were true. Omnipotence settles everything at a stroke: 'Allah is great!' But to settle everything is equivalent to settling nothing.

The theology of law introduces a modification by recognising certain limits which omnipotence must not transgress. God must not (apart, it is argued, from some equivalent) justify the guilty. Do we not say well that the theology of law knows only punishment, not merit? Is it not further true that a genuinely Christian theology

must do more than define limits for the divine working? Must it not ascertain the divinely revealed rules and methods by which the grace of God determines itself [1] for its own high ends, if God is to be not merely the omnipotent one, but the good, the just, the gracious one?

If, while finding a 'need be' for Christ's sacrifice in order to procure forgiveness, we account for salvation in the region of character by God's mere power, then we throw the saving moral energies of Christ into what theological tradition calls His 'office' as 'King.' He releases spiritual power when He will, and there is none to resist. This would be a revival of Calvinism or hyper-Calvinism. Freedom and responsibility would have nothing to do with salvation in the region of human character.

In spite of the neglect of this section of doctrine, and in spite of the Augustinian tradition, there have naturally been attempts to supplement such trains of thought with others more definite and more Christian. Rationalism dwells on the revelations made by Christ, and on His moral appeals. This makes the 'prophetic office' of Christ central for the conquest of sin. Kingly omnipotence falls out of sight. We can say of this tendency what we can hardly say of a theology of salvation by omnipotence. That Christ is a prophet is *true so far as it goes*. But what becomes of the *necessity* of the rationalistic Christ? The great prophet reveals certain truths and furnishes certain motives. In the course of history, many agents of the divine purpose have been doing that. This would leave Jesus of Nazareth first among equals, but with an insecure primacy, and liable to be superseded by some 'other' for whom we might 'look.' It would need a sweeping reinterpretation of what we mean by revelation to safeguard this doctrine and make it adequate to the Christian thought. When our restatement was complete, we should assuredly have discovered in Christ more than a prophet.

[1] And is not externally determined by anything else whatsoever.

Another effort to show how the grace of Christ actually reaches and moves the individual human heart directs us to the psychological influence of forgiveness. At the present day, this appeal is characteristic of Dr. Denney. He never tires of expounding how a sense of guilt and then of pardon melts the heart and remoulds it into the image of God. One has no desire to disparage this train of thought. Like the last, it is all true so far as it goes; and perhaps it goes further. But is it the whole truth? Practically, whatever his theories may say, Dr. Denney seems to answer Yes. It follows inevitably that he has little taste for Romans vi-viii. Except as he can read substitutionary punishment into these chapters, and read out again the glories of forgiveness, they count for little with one of our most brilliant if hardest theological minds. On this interpretation, Christ's salvation of human souls belongs to His 'office as a priest.' In the doctrine of Christ's priesthood and sacrifice, evangelicalism technically so-called has always felt itself at home. But the natural bearing of priesthood is on God.[1] The interest of Dr. Denney's theology is that he has ceased to be exclusively occupied with the Godward aspect of Christ's work—or, in man, exclusively with the assurance of peace to the conscience—and that he seeks to discover powerful moral energies in the very essence of the gospel. The drawback is that, like great political leaders, while he sees with extraordinary clearness what lies in the focus of his thought, he is blind to everything else. One-sidedness may for the moment be strength to the partisan, but it is impoverishment to the church of Christ. It will not do to teach or even to suggest that mankind are renewed and sanctified exclusively by the consciousness of being forgiven.

Nothing is more remarkable in Ritschl's theology than his treatment of the Three Offices, and nowhere is his

[1] Socinus long ago posed the question: *Numquid erga Deum effecerit?*

advance upon Schleiermacher more manifest. The kingship, says Ritschl, is not a special office, but the central designation of Christ the Messiah *as* Christ. We are left then with two offices or aspects. As royal prophet Christ represents God to men, while as royal priest Christ represents men before God. The first is the Abelardian tradition, the second the Anselmic. In his own doctrine of Christ as Head of the community Ritschl claims to combine the full truth of both positions. M'Leod Campbell similarly divides his study of the central part of the Atonement into 'Christ as representing God to men,' and 'Christ as representing men before God.' But he breaks ground untouched by Ritschl when he subdivides,[1] recognising under each of these a 'retrospective' and a 'prospective' aspect of Atonement. The retrospective aspect of Christ's dealing with God contains Campbell's reconstruction of the old doctrine of substitutionary Atonement. We are more interested here in the other 'retrospective' aspect of Christ's work—viz. as dealing with 'men.' If that could be satisfactorily expounded, it would furnish what we are now seeking—an explanation (for our faith, if not altogether for our understanding) of the process by which Christ's purity eats out the taint of sin from the human family. Campbell, however, devotes very few pages to this part of his subject. One questions whether they do not owe their place rather to the symmetry of his scheme than to any living insight, even on the part of that deeply religious mind, into this phase of the mystery of godliness. The 'retrospectiveness' of Christ's gracious teaching closely resembles what other pages discuss under its 'prospectiveness.'

We must conclude that the scheme of the Three Offices fails to help us in our study of the conquest of sin, and

[1] To speak by the card, the chapter headings are 'Retrospective' and 'Prospective,' the Godward and manward references being subdivisions under each.

does no justice to what divines call the 'physical' basis of the Christian salvation. Even as remodelled—independently, and to different degrees, by Ritschl and by M'Leod Campbell—it still fails to tell us how the fruits of Christ's work touch and transform human hearts.

We turn from these modern essays to the greatest biblical statement on the subject, at Romans vi-viii. The discussion there is bound up with the obscure Pauline designation of the principle of sin as 'flesh.' It appears as if the apostle taught, though possibly only in later years, that Christ's presence among men in 'the exact likeness of a body of sinful flesh'[1] rendered Him personally, and even apart from His representative character, liable to death as a penal infliction. By dying, and by rising again as pure Spirit with all the potencies of the divine, Christ became effectively the Saviour of men. His people enter into what may not unfitly be called 'mystic' fellowship with Him. Notably they do this at baptism.

Ritschl is not well qualified for doing justice to this passage. He proposes to subordinate it to the discussion of reconciliation, but in practice comes near to forcing it on one side and denying it any recognition. Others again—like a distinguished contributor to the present series, Dr. Peake—are so interested in studying the morally redeeming forces proceeding from Christ that they dismiss the theology of justification to a secondary place. To do so is characteristically modern, but not perhaps perfectly wise.

Ritschl is disqualified from doing full justice to this train of thought; but can we entirely repel his strictures? Will any Protestant evangelical feel himself able to accept at their full value, as dogmatic truths, the brilliant imaginative formulæ by which Paul explains the origins of man's

[1] Dr. Denney seems to be able to accept the view that 'likeness' (Rom. viii. 3) asserts Christ's similarity to us rather than His distinctive sinlessness, just because he convinces himself that Paul taught the fall of human nature in Adam. We have concluded that more probably Paul had formulated no finding whatever on that point.

new life in the experiences of the Saviour? Are we seriously to be asked to affirm that one part of Christ's victory was due to His becoming a disembodied spirit? Are evangelicals seriously to be asked to attach dogmatic value to the Pauline symbolism of baptism?

What remains with us from St. Paul is this at least, that Christ passed through processes of moral and spiritual experience which constitute Him a fountain of saving influences to those who trust Him. He died; and we can see that death is the utmost test of faithfulness, the highest possible reach of devotion towards God and men. He died by human sin; willingly, though with mysterious horror, yielding Himself to the Father's appointment; and so His divine-human life was constituted the fountain-head of a new humanity redeemed from sin to God. He died as He lived, without sin; therefore there was no flaw in that new humanity which He bequeathed to us. According to universalism, it is mechanically necessary that every soul of man should choose the good. According to Augustinianism, it is mechanically necessary that the elect should choose the good,[1] and mechanically impossible that any non-elect soul should do so. We must rather recognise that in Christ crucified and risen there is stored up all that is necessary to create a new heart in the individual, and a new society where God's will shall be done 'as in heaven.' Through that faith we may and must, as believers even more than as baptized men, reckon ourselves dead to sin and alive to God through Christ. But we dare not hold that there is any magical necessitation in the spell of Jesus. The power is there, to its last and fullest perfection. Yet this is He who Himself said: 'I would—ye would not.'

While a doctrine of the conquest of sin is liable to be criticised by orthodoxy as at best superfluous, it is also criticised by extremists in modernism. Such critics have

[1] If the word 'choose' can be properly employed in such a context.

passed beyond the stage of being less interested in forgiveness than in the reform or new creation of the soul. They are impatient of any doctrine of sin. They find it negative and meaningless. To get rid of sin we need only acquire goodness. Let in the light and the darkness will go. Our nature as men and our history as a race are progressive. The qualitative contrast between sin and holiness is adroitly transformed into a quantitative contrast between the more and the less advanced—the better souls, and the inferior but still essentially good souls. How else, we are asked, since God is 'immanent'?

Let us try to meet with sympathy all that is true here. We have already acknowledged the danger of being too pathological and of studying goodness too exclusively in negative values. It is true that the problem set us is not to return from sin to an imagined neutrality, but to rise—whether from creaturely weakness or from the stain of evil—to a perfected Christian manhood in the full light of God. It is true that morality as well as physical science speaks to us of progress, and that we must look for growth in the Christian life; with its humble beginnings; with its saddening relapses; but also 'in due season,' 'if we faint not,' with all the wonder and the joy of harvest.

But there is another side. We believe in a God above nature. We believe in Christ as well as in duty or conscience; and in Christ are summed up all the positive forces of the new life, as truly as all the associated negative processes of deliverance. We know, too, how experience of the presence of God shatters the attitude of self-complacency in which the doctrines we are criticising thrive. 'Now mine eye seeth thee, therefore I abhor myself.' Let us say it once more: the moral consciousness leads us to the very verge of religion—of faith in God and humble repentance before Him. Surely, when the fanatics of modernism meet the Son of Man face to face, they will

count if need be even modernism as refuse that they may win Christ and be found in Him.

Apart from efforts to show how the new life came into being in Christ, various attempts have been made to show how the sacred contagion spreads from Him to us.

Schleiermacher made great use of the conception of Sinlessness. We are to be saved by sharing Christ's sinless perfection. Everything else, such as forgiveness, is incidental. Obviously this contains much that appeals to a modern mind, and I do not know that we can call the formula false. If extreme modernists object to its negative form, does not the objection reveal their neglect of God? For in His presence what we call the smallest sin becomes intolerable. Yet the formula is not biblical, and perhaps it is misleading. As we know the Christian life here and now, Christian character is not always, if ever, sinless.

M'Leod Campbell makes great use of the conception of Christ's filial righteousness. The distinctive element which Christ contributes to human goodness is the fellowship of His Sonship towards God, with its correlate of brotherhood towards men. This is surely deep truth; and yet possibly even this is not absolutely central.

We might be content to expound Christ rather as possessor of the knowledge of God.[1] As sin centrally is neither weakness nor carnality but loss of touch with God, so redemption centrally is conscious and graciously given fellowship with Him. Such fellowship we may fitly recognise as the subjective spring of all Christian goodness.

A suggestion in a different direction may be recalled. Schleiermacher in part, and Ritschl more strongly, assign a great place to the Church as the specific creation of our

[1] Verbally this is quite in the vein of Schleiermacher; but Schleiermacher substitutes a quasi-philosophical 'God-consciousness' for that ethical and experimental knowledge of God which the Bible praises.

Lord. While making no hierarchical implications, they find in the church high theological and religious value. Christ saves us by placing us within a community of redemption.[1] Solitary salvation is unthinkable. It is as a fellowship and as a common experience that Christianity wins the world. The train of thought may be criticised. Some dismiss it summarily as a mere disguise for rationalism. They would contend that the saving influences of Christ if located in an outward fellowship do not amount to real salvation at all. Yet the easy criticism is rarely the satisfactory verdict. Whatever else is true about redemption, the New Testament compels us to see in it more than an individual blessing; and the constitution and preservation of a church must be recognised as part of the Redeemer's work Nothing but ill-will or prejudice could suggest that this interpretation excludes all complementary readings of the great mystery.

There is yet another question to consider. How far does the redemption of character advance within the present life? Does it always imply sinlessness? Does it sometimes reach that point? Or never?

On this as on several details the teaching of the New Testament seems to be indefinite. We may, if we choose, say that eschatological enthusiasm prevented definition. Christians were looking for the 'passing away' of the world and the coming of 'grace.' Great things were momentarily possible, but how much greater were the things just at hand! Rigorist sects show the after-working of this enthusiasm. In the great Church only a few saints are held to break the monotony of universal sinlessness[2]; and Protestantism denies the few exceptions. In modern times the hope of sinlessness is again heard of, its greatest champion being Wesley.

[1] Along with which Ritschl would ask us to take the Kingdom of God as the fellowship of ethical service.

[2] Technically, of course, they are not defined as sinless beings.

Against perfectionism orthodoxy appeals to the standard of moral law,[1] and reiterates that 'no mere man since the fall is able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but doth daily break them in thought, word, and deed.'[2] This surely supplies our last and clearest ground for breaking with the theology of moral law. One would not press technical forms of expression; but is this a mere technicality? According to St. Paul, 'Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under law but under grace.' According to school Protestantism, 'Sin shall have extensive dominion over you, for ye are permanently under law.' Has Christ's redemption made no appreciable difference to the possibilities of human character? A definition involving such results is surely a blunder. Who can do his best if assured beforehand that he is destined to fail?

A striking plea for something like perfectionism is found in Professor A. G. Hogg's *Christ's Message of the Kingdom*. The unpretending form[3] in which his work is issued must not disguise from us the solid scholarly knowledge behind it, or the seriousness of the suggestions it makes. Professor Hogg is keenly interested in the eschatological interpretation of Christ's words. He suggests, however, that the sayings about the imminence of kingdom and judgment may have contained a moral element, such as we recognise in other prophecies. They may have been hypothetical, not categorical. If so, the words were a challenge to faith and zeal in the days of Christ's flesh. Faith and zeal largely failed then, although the failure was more than compensated by the Master's own faithfulness unto death. The same words survive! They challenge faith and zeal in us to-day.

[1] So the late Rev. J. F. Macpherson, who was well qualified to speak for orthodoxy. I refer to papers in the *British Weekly*.

[2] Westminster Assembly's *Shorter Catechism*.

[3] But is it quite fair to submit such novelties to study circles and prayer circles?

Modern study often distinguishes between the kernel of the gospel and the husk. Eschatological excitement has been widely regarded as a time wrapping, long since thrown away. Mr. Hogg asks us to reconsider that view. What if the thing we have been calling husk is part of the precious kernel? Had we but a little more faith and loyalty, might we not work miracles? Might we not be done with sin? Can God be unwilling? He gave these gifts to Christ's age; has that age any boundaries? If we seek the gifts, will not the same Father bestow them through the same channel of the Divine Son?

It has been necessary in writing the present little book to make up one's mind on an infinite number of perplexed questions. Happily we have no need to deal with a question so remote from our doctrine as the interesting problem of modern healings. But the possibility of sinlessness is a question lying full in our track. What are we to say regarding it?

We have already referred to the connection between the sinful individual and the world. Is not a false note struck when, the world being so half redeemed or so unredeemed as it is, one who is not the world's redeemer lays claim to sinlessness? Who can trace the ramifications of influence so as to say: 'I have no responsibility whatever for the evil round me'?

Again, we may quote St. Paul: *I know nothing against myself. Yet am I not hereby justified; but he that judgeth me is the Lord.* What have those to do with the praise of sinlessness who have still to appear at the bar of Christ? Either to claim sinlessness, or to ascribe it to others, is surely to *judge before the time* and *before the Lord comes*, with vindication for the misjudged and exposure for hypocrites.

Finally, we have Christ's saying: *Why callest thou me good? None is good but God.* In the divine presence is it not unseemly to imagine the very possibility of our

having already attained and been made perfect? Humble dependence upon God in Christ is our only wisdom.

Refusing then to define the moral tasks of Christians as *a priori* impossible, we would also refuse to affirm individual sinlessness or even to discuss its possibility, before the day when the great company of the redeemed in the church of Christ by God's own sentence are declared *faultless*.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE ULTIMATE PENALTY OF SIN

THE thought of punishment has to struggle hard for life in this age of materialistic softness. We may approach it, like other great truths, through our experiences in the family and in the state. Ultimately the judge of all is God, and His administration sums up and transcends all lesser moral experiences. Punishment from Him will be punishment indeed. Yet we must not forget that He who gives Himself to this strange work is God our Father.

In the family we meet with chastisement rather than with strict punishment. Chastisements are meant primarily to improve. A second alleged distinction is that chastisement of a child does not involve shame like the punishment of an adult citizen. This surely might be better expressed. The child is not fully responsible nor fully guilty; hence the comparative absence of disgrace. But while deserved chastisement improves, unjust punishment of a child—punishment resented not merely by the passion of a moment but by the persistent verdict of his conscience—will go near to ruin him. Thus through the distinctive features of chastisement imposed by love we can detect the sterner lineaments of a punishment decreed by justice. Correspondingly, the very punishments of our maturity, with all their bitterness, may prove to us healing chastisements, if we will have it so. This may

prove true even of legal penalties, and of these as inflicted even by imperfectly ethicised human governments. May we go further? An analogy is drawn between childish immaturity and the misbehaviour of children of a larger growth in Coventry Patmore's touching verses, *The Toys*. Their teaching has been called 'deadly,'[1] and if the verses meant to write off sins as peccadilloes one must concur; but need it be so? Like as a father pities his children, yet does not omit to punish, will not the Father of our spirits, while punishing us, note also our littleness and rawness and profoundly pity us?

There are many reasons why we cannot absolutely contrast punishing with chastising. 'Behold,' says St. Paul, 'the goodness and severity of God; toward them that fell severity but toward thee goodness.' We humbly receive the apostle's admonition; yet as modern Christians, striving to learn by the age-long discipline of God, we have to compare as well as contrast the two things. The higher seems to involve the lower; the lower in turn may pass into the higher. We cannot but believe that God's severity continually reveals His goodness, and again that His goodness itself is severe. And we find Him because of this the more wonderful and the more divine.

Punishment cannot be excluded from domestic discipline; but the very idea of capital punishment seems irreconcilable with family life. The Old Testament contains a terrible law for dealing with a wicked son.[2] It says nothing about the age of the doomed malefactor. In any case, the Christian spirit must repudiate such a law. Juvenile offenders against the law of the land, under the actual judiciary and administration of modern countries, are not treated as fully responsible and never as irreclaimable. The danger rather is to-day that the young criminal may have moral helps and opportunities which his neighbour who keeps clear of crime does not receive.

[1] By Sir W. Robertson Nicoll. [2] Deut. xxi. 18-21.

Still, however difficult to apply it, the principle is unescapable.

When we exchange youth and the family for the state properly so-called, we enter a very different moral climate. The state, through all history and at the present day, is the region of organised force—of force organised for social and moral ends. If force is a wrong thing, the Christian must turn Tolstoyist, agitate for the disbanding not only of army and navy but of the police, and withdraw his loyalty from the ordinances of man and from the apostles of Christ. Will it be said that he has to do this in obedience to Christ's own teaching? Surely such a view lays altogether exaggerated emphasis on the few verses in the Sermon on the Mount which speak of non-resistance.[1] At a not much earlier point in the Sermon, Christ has spoken of penalties to be unsparingly inflicted (Matt. v. 25, 26). The Old Testament believed in punishment, and Christ reverences the Old Testament. Indeed, as the eschatological school have so loudly insisted, Jesus lived and taught under the menacing cloud of a supreme divine judgment. The exaggerated modern catchword, 'Force is no remedy,'[2] has to reckon not only with the world's common sense but with the world's conscience; and not with these only but with the Lord God Omnipotent. So long as the Lord reigns, force is part of His remedy for sin.

Correspondingly, the business of the state, as known in history or as described in Scripture, is to employ the implement which St. Paul calls a sword and Mr. Roosevelt more colloquially a big stick. The civilised world was taken aback when Lord Salisbury addressed a menacing speech to Sultan Abdul Hamid and presently explained that no practical policy was to follow it up; a *preacher*, he said, did not capture and punish evil-doers. Precisely!

[1] Do they not point to giving up personal revenge? Compare 1 Peter iii. 9.
[2] John Bright.

But is a magistrate a simple moral theorist? Lord Salisbury was head of a national administration.[1]

Three theories have been advanced in explanation of the penalties inflicted by the strong arm of the state: first, that of retribution; secondly, of reformation; and, thirdly, of deterrence. We must hold that all three motives enter into the policy of a moralised state, but the first is central. No punishment is good which may not hope to reclaim. None is good which does not deter other citizens from similar crimes. But, above all, punishment must be deserved. Other aims are kept in view by the state, not so much in order to do its duty in punishing, but in order to do its duty—so far as it may—in building up the good life. That is doubtless a higher task than penal justice. Still, punishment lies at the foundation of the state's moral activities. Its primary obligation in the presence of crime is towards those who are law-abiding. And its primary duty towards the criminal himself is not to reform him but to punish him. It will reform him if it can; punish him it must. As in the home so in the prison, punishment recognised as just and accepted with true repentance may well help to reclaim; but if regarded merely as the force of the stronger it will irritate or madden.

The case is very similar with deterrence. A public conscience must be formed in support of state penalties.

[1] One might illustrate by a ludicrous saying attributed to the late Benjamin Jowett. Some one in his hearing having described a bishop as greater than a judge because 'the judge can only say You be hanged, but the bishop says You be damned'—'Yes,' rejoined Jowett, 'but when the judge says You be hanged, you *are* hanged.' The saying deserves to be well pondered. Apart from its pungent scepticism there is a great deal of truth in it. Civil punishments ought to be certain, prompt, irresistible.

The feminist agitators for a vote, who trade upon sex weakness, are doing their best to mine the foundations of society. But the Passive Resisters first set the evil example. 'Be subject to every human ordinance, for the Lord's sake.' 'Ye must needs be subject, not only for the wrath, but also *for conscience sake.* For for this cause *ye pay tribute* also: for he is *God's minister.* . . . Render therefore to all their dues.'

To be deterred simply 'for wrath' is not to be moralised, but rather driven further from goodness; to discover in the state's penalty moral authority addressing the conscience is to learn at least initial lessons in goodness. On the other hand, punishment beyond the amount that best deters cannot be justified in human administration. The state's tribunal is not the ultimate moral tribunal of the universe. And conscience will assure us that under almost all conceivable circumstances a penalty too severe to deter is also unjust.

One extreme view would hold that justice is scarcely more than an alias for convenience. FitzJames Stephen, in a brilliant perverse book,[1] claimed that impartiality was the whole of justice. Should the law decree that red-haired men are to be hanged, it is 'unjust' to hang under that statute any man whose hair is black, and perhaps to omit hanging the man whose hair is red; but there is no meaning in calling a *law* unjust. We may at once grant that impartiality in the interpretation of law is the first clear demand of justice. But can it ever pass as the whole? Behind all our clumsy approximations there is a pattern of absolute Justice shown us in the Mount. No community of civilised men, unless among sophists or possibly among dons, would recognise the 'just' hanging of red-haired men as other than an insulting mockery of all justice.

An opposite extreme would try to measure due penalty by an exact law. Distributive justice works with definite quantities. One must pay one's debts before one may begin to show generosity in giving. If there is a dispute about property, law must side with one claimant and non-suit the other. Or, if it orders a division, law must decide precisely how much is to be allotted to each. But corrective justice cannot reach such quantitative exactness. An old attempt in that direction is found in the *lex talionis*. We regard that type of punishment as

[1] *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity.*

barbarous and not just. Only perhaps in the case of capital punishment does the appeal retain its force. To take life under ordinary conditions, from those guilty of lesser crimes, shocks us. We feel it to be wicked. To omit the taking of the murderer's life shocks the instinctive conscience (Gen. ix. 6).

The general principle of punishment would seem to be that the criminal has put himself wrong with the state, and must pay such penalty as the general welfare makes it needful to require. It is a ghastly incident of war if a commander has to order those guilty not only of outrage but even of looting to be shot. Yet the man who pays a revolting but necessary penalty has no right to speak of injustice if he is guilty, if he has been warned, and if the penalty is impartially exacted.

Out of the mass of lesser penalties with their mixed motives the dreadful figure of capital punishment isolates itself; for it seeks to secure hardly anything more than the execution of justice. No one can fail to shrink from 'the hideous symbol of a deliberately inflicted sudden death.' A blunder here can never be rectified. It is truly an awful thing for man to do to man, not in the heat of passion, or amid the clamour of battle, but with the icy coldness and deliberation of law. Perhaps the wisdom or unwisdom of a death penalty must be decided by a study of deterrence. If the substitution of minor penalties leads to no increase in murders, the state may feel bound to confine itself to less tragic sanctions. Yet one fears something would be lost if capital punishment were abandoned. Such naked and unrelieved punishment is a specially eloquent witness to responsibility and guilt. The state says to the murderer, 'My business is not to reform you but to strike you dead.' Rightly the state adds, 'May the Lord have mercy on your soul,' for the human state is no supreme court of justice. As the rigorist sects of early Christians admitted the possibility

of hope in God for those who had sinned unto death, but felt that on their own part unmixed severity was called for, so must the state feel towards the wilful shedder of blood. This is the ideal of punishment as corresponding to supreme guilt—something swift and fatal. To torture —to inflict pain before putting to death—is revolting. To allow sentimental pity for the criminal to empty our minds of mercy for his victims and of sacred justice is not less deeply immoral.[1]

It may seem strange to spend so much time in a short theological book upon questions of human law. Yet this is done deliberately. If our theology is to be anything better than a castle in the air, we must learn our thoughts of God and of His ways partly from teachings given us in the life of the state. And the sophists who destroy the basis of personal religion begin their mischievous work by degrading state-law out of all touch with essential justice. The meshes of human penalty cannot but be coarse. Some of the guiltier escape, while many of the less guilty are entangled. Sometimes even the innocent are made victims, and in the name of justice wrong is perpetrated. Yet upon the whole, in spite of human errors, God fulfils Himself to some degree by means of this harsh machinery; and there is little wisdom and less mercy in fighting against God. If the state is to rank as more than a social convenience, if human government is to serve moral ends, it must punish the forms of guilt which fall under its cognisance. Were the citizen too trivial to be punished, he must sink into part of the mechanism of nature—too paltry to be ennobled by the love of man or by the fear of God.

Another theory tries to define punishment in terms of

[1] When Bacon calls revenge a 'wild justice' he points to a significant truth. Even in revengeful feeling there is a crude sense of right which craves to be evolved into something purer. Bacon does not say, what the sophists who quote him constantly insinuate, that justice is never anything but a thinly disguised revenge.

consequences. Looking away from the family and the state, it discovers things in human life that may in a sense be called penal; but it explains these as simply the effects of previous acts. To sin is 'to break the laws of nature.' And the laws of nature automatically punish wrongdoing. 'Consequences,' says George Eliot, 'are unpitying.'

Perhaps there are really two distinct theories which speak in these terms. One declares[1] that the study of natural causation will reveal all that is true or equitable in regard to punishment. The other is a phase of Christian rationalism. It recognises God, but a God so immanent in the forces of His world that He can take no action in support of justice beyond the slow working of natural law.

If this were given to us as part of the truth, we could only welcome it. It was long ago worked out by the sombre genius of Butler in Part I of the *Analogy*. Granted a boundless continuance of the working of moral tendency, we can see that chance will be eliminated, and that each man will receive in the end according to his deeds. 'Every day,' it has been said, 'is judgment day.' Or judgment will fulfil itself; *Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap*. Yet one fears that the guilty conscience might be slow indeed to recognise justice in the working out of consequences. Those who amuse themselves with games of chance know what extraordinary 'runs of luck' occur; what a large sweep of evidence is needed, and what careful statistics, to prove the real difference between good and bad play. Whatever moral truth is taught (by St. Paul or others) under the imagery of natural law, it needs to be complemented by the vision of a God passing judgment upon us and making us know at last that we are in His hands.

Another suggestion has been advanced in the name of consequences. Sin—continued and increased sin—has been regarded as sin's true punishment. Surely there is

[1] With Herbert Spencer.

a mistake here! It might please Diabolus well that sin should inevitably result in more sin. A divine being who made such appointment, if He made no other would of course not be merciful; but would He be at all righteous? To use such terms is metaphor or epigram, not theology or religion.

We pass on at length to the subject of immediate and proper divine punishments. Yet we do not leave the subjects we have already considered. Mediation and immediacy are distinctions that hold for us rather than for God. In the family, in the state, in the workings of providence, God is making for righteousness and punishing sin. But there is more to be said than this. Particularly, we have to face once more in this highest region the question whether justice exists. If justice is among the rules of God's action, it is woven into the texture of ultimate fact. Whereas, if God never inflicts punishment in the interests of justice, that whole mode of thinking must be relegated to 'appearance' in contrast with 'reality.' We contend here that justice is part of the truth of God's ways, though not the whole and not the highest part.

It is necessary to contemplate the collapse of the idea of justice not only among adherents of naturalism, but among many theologians and Christian men. Dr. Orchard writes a book on sin in which he deliberately refuses to say anything about guilt. Canon Temple[1] repudiates as 'wholly without foundation' the belief that 'wickedness *ought* somehow to be balanced by pain.' The same poisonous moral heresy is being disseminated by the brilliant clergyman who writes in the *Manchester Guardian* every week, under the signature of 'Artifex.' *If the foundation be destroyed, what can the righteous do?*[2]

[1] *The Faith and Modern Thought*, p. 140.

[2] When Bishop Butler wrote, such views were characteristic of Tindal's deism. Their vogue in contemporary Anglicanism seems to date from Moberly's *Atonement and Personality*.

When the robber on the cross yielded to the impress of Christ's personality, he said to his fellow, 'We indeed are in this condemnation justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds.' That is an experience of priceless moral value, and the doctrine of the modern Sophists renders it meaningless. When the prodigal returned home, he made his confession, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.' If it is right to separate the thought of sin from that of guilt, the prodigal was putting himself to needless distress; and the Lord who spoke this parable as the light of the world was diffusing not light but darkness.

We stand for the recognition of punishment, though not of punishment alone. A desire to bring to reformation will surely not be less strong in God our Redeemer than it is in the state, but incomparably stronger. There must also be a divine purpose to deter; so far as deterrence works on moral lines, by appeal to the conscience.

Yet, if every such appeal has failed, out of the punishments — primarily human or immediately divine—which are meant to reclaim there may disengage itself that ultimate punishment of sin which is hardly other[1] than unmixed penalty. The capital punishment of the universe is the limiting case of punishment as such. Truly it is an appalling thought: that the Father God should despair of any lost child, and surrender him to destruction! That He should write as the epitaph on any human life, *Better for such a one that he had never been!* If we judged in the light of the family alone—and Christ calls God Father —we must dismiss such thoughts as a bad dream.

But our materials cannot be thus summarily simplified. To speak of antinomy in Christian doctrine may be dubiously wise; but here, if anywhere, one might discover

[1] At most the Old Testament writes, 'Morning by morning I will . . . *cut off from the city of the Lord* all workers of iniquity,' and the New Testament, 'The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall *gather out of his kingdom* all . . . that do iniquity.'

two lines of ascertainable moral truths in seemingly sharpest antagonism. On one side there is the thought of a God boundlessly strong, boundlessly good; the God who is revealed to us by Christ and in Christ; the God who sent Christ. On the other side there is the unmistakable working of moral tendency. We dare not sacrifice either of these truths to the other. To us, as Christian men half-way advanced in the experiences of redemption, it is not given to know what the end of the process is to be. It is ours to work, and pray, and hope; but also it is ours to fear and to warn. This dark uncertainty may be part of the penalty or of the chastening appointed by God for His children of our sinful race, that we may not put ourselves at ease by any unauthorised comfort. It might be morally impossible for those half-redeemed to be given the promise of universal escape. Such a declaration might defeat and destroy itself.

The darker possibility is enforced upon us in one of the most terrible paragraphs of Bishop Butler. 'Reflections of this kind are not without their terrors to serious persons, the most free from enthusiasm, and of the greatest strength of mind; but it is fit things be stated and considered as they really are. And there is, in the present age, a certain fearlessness with regard to what may be hereafter under the government of God, which nothing but an universally acknowledged demonstration on the side of atheism can justify; and which makes it quite necessary that men be reminded, and if possible made to feel, that there is no sort of ground for being thus presumptuous, even upon the most sceptical principles. For, may it not be said of any person upon his being born into the world, he may behave so as to be of no service to it, but by being made an example of the woeful effects of vice and folly? That he may, as any one may if he will, incur an infamous execution from the hands of civil justice; or in some other course of extravagance shorten his days, or bring upon

himself infamy and diseases worse than death? So that it had been better for him, even with regard to this present world, that he had never been born. And is there any pretence of reason for people to think themselves secure, and talk as if they had certain proof that, let them act as licentiously as they will, there can be nothing analogous to this, with regard to a future and more general interest, under the providence and government of the same God?'[1]

In still more sacred words we have the same warning, barely half relieved with a gleam of light at the end. 'And one said unto him, Lord, are they few that be saved? And he said unto them, *Strive to enter in by the narrow door; for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, open to us; and he shall answer and say to you, I know you not whence ye are; then shall ye begin to say, We did eat and drink in thy presence, and thou didst teach in our streets; and he shall say, I tell you, I know not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves cast forth without. And they shall come from the east and west, and from the north and south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And behold there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.*'

[1] *Analogy*, closing paragraph of Part I, Chap. ii.

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M189

Mackintosh, R. D.D.

Christianity + sin.

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